

# Maclean's

Canada's Weekly Newsmagazine

May 24, 1999



**Louise Arbour: Will she go to the Supreme Court?**

## The Second Coming

The faithful are flocking to the return of *Star Wars*, and why not? Pop culture has become a new religion.



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From the  
**Editor**

## An enduring back-page partnership

**They insist they have never had a fight, although they have worked together for more than 30 years. They have never missed a deadline, even when they were on separate continents. For 20 years, they have been inseparable—an old back page of *Men*. Allen Fotheringham, who writes the column, made no further introduction. Roy Peterson, the unassuming gentleman whose illustrations grace the page, is a legend in his own right. On May 8, he was his seventh National Newspaper Award finalist. In *The Vancouver Sun*, a record not only for cartoons, but for any journalist. Last week, the two old pals were reunited in Toronto, where Fotheringham was inducted into the Canadian News Hall of Fame, and for a "swelled war" that left "few fathers unscathed, cowards unborn or patriots unscathed."**

The remarkable partnership began when Fotheringham ran the *Sun*'s opinion page and Peterson did the illustrations. In 1975, when *Men* changed from monthly to biweekly, Fotheringham became the back-page columnist—a move that has inspired many imitations in other magazines.

Peterson signed on in 1978 when the magazine was weekly.

Actually, Peterson first appeared in *Men* in 1961, when it was a general feature magazine, with the first of a series of gag cartoons. Four years later, his "Peterson on the page" became a regular feature in the so-called yellow pages section until 1970.

Each week, Peterson starts his *Men*-esque arguments after answering a Friday-morning call from Fotheringham.

Fotheringham (left) and Peterson, one of the winning cartoonists (below)



whenever he is, who advises his partner on the general theme of his piece. "Some of the time," says Fotheringham, "I haven't written it. But we work on the same wavelength." Only once was there a short circuit: Fotheringham told Peterson he was going to focus on a Japanese friend who dressed in a kilt for the annual St. Andrew's ball. Peterson dutifully sketched the scene—but Fotheringham inadvertently forgot to describe it when he wrote his column, leaving *Men*'s readers to puzzle about the meaning of the man in the kilt.

Fotheringham insists it has been easy to get along with Peterson. "How could you fight with him?" he says. "He's the world's meanest guy. He's a prince."

Peterson says the secret is "I have no ego myself. Allen has one large enough for the two of us." But Peterson is upset that Dr. Froh got all the attention. The rally carried him all these years, Peterson develops. "In fact, I made him. I actually wrote the back page and do the cartoons. His real name is Murray. He stole a deli. I just hire him for appearances."

Spoken like a man who belongs on the back page.

*Robert Lewis*

Newsmag

## Notes

### The Force is back

When the original *Star Wars* opened in 1977, *Sun* writer Andrew Clark, then a 10-year-old, saw it 11 times. That makes him a casual fan compared with

the fans who lined up five weeks outside theaters across North America for tickets to *Star Wars Episode I—The Phantom Menace*. In this week's cover package (page 84), film critic Brian D. Johnson examines *Star Wars* lore and the rise of pop culture in my-babe religion. While Johnson went on to cover the Cannes International Film Festival, Clark plucked a fan from the line outside Manhattan's Ziegfeld Theater and took him to his guest to a preview

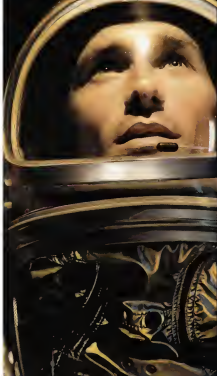
screening of *The Phantom Menace*. "I thought he might like it," Clark says. "All these years of waiting, waiting away and his dream was there before him." As for the writer himself, Clark doubts whether he will find an urge to see the new *Star Wars* 11 times. "I think two times will probably do it."

The cover package was edited by Aering Entertainment's Editor Barbara Wideman and designed by Associate Art Director Gladie Sabatini.

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# Opening Notes

Edited by Tanya Davies



## A Canadian in Wonderland

The first time Canadian actress Molly Parker came to the Cannes film festival the crowd's reaction to a neophobic heroine in *Aloud* (1996). That was two years ago. This week, Parker is stirring audience angst again on the French Riviera, but in a much different capacity: instead of coping with the dead, she is embracing the pain of motherhood. Parker, 26, portrays anguished mother in two movies premiering in Cannes. In British director Michael Winterbottom's drama *Wonderland*, showing in the main competition, she adapts a South London account to portray a woman who goes into labor. And in *The Five Senses*, a Quebecois *Fortnight* entry by fellow Transatlantic Jewess Nadine, she plays a mother whose young child suddenly goes missing.

"I can't think of anything more nightmareish than that," says a jet-lagged Parker, sipping a ginger ale in a hotel lobby in Cannes. But in *Wonderland*, where she scored out the director's childbirth scene, "I was actually quite terrified of it." Winterbottom filmed her simulated labour in the middle of a hospital

maternity ward. "All these women were going birth," recalls Parker. "I was wondering around and they thought I was there to have a baby. I got to listen to them screaming their faces off for the most part." Winterbottom had originally planned to interrupt Parker's scene with footage of an actual birth, so he filmed her in the different birthing positions—not knowing which would be required. In the end, no real-life footage was used. But Parker's "labour" lasted eight hours. "It was the most exhausting thing I've ever done," says the actress, who has yet to live through actual childbirth.

In Cannes, meanwhile, sexuality in the order of the day. *Pink* premieres drew loudly dressed men and supermodels in full-on sex acts all week long. Something Parker is just getting used to. "We were doing interviews and *discussions* around with two bodyguards," she says, "and I went down 40 downward arrows, these hyperdermatids, so as if I would wear one to the premiere." Parker chose the most delicate one—but she still turned heads.



Actress Catherine Zeta-Jones and Sean Connery (*Pink*) (below right) with Winterbottom and co-stars Shirley Henderson and Gina McKee: the Cannes scene (left) premieres drew loudly dressed men and supermodels in the fashion red seats



## Ally en français

The hip television series *Ally McBeal*, starring Calista Flockhart, has ruffled feathers ever since its 1997 debut. Its rife diction, a flighty lawyer dressed pink, fierce views for her neo-conservatives and her descent in downtown Quebec. Now *Ally McBeal* is under the again—this time in Quebec. Complaints have sprung up over the Quebecois accent, used in the French-language dub of the series, which first aired on the private TVA network on April 27. Some fans gave *Ally McBeal* a thumbs-down and called TVA to complain. "They are too used to hearing the Quebecois accent on television," says TVA spokeswoman Louise



Flockhart: a hard dose to swallow

Marone, although the actress that hearing Quebecois complain about a Quebecois dub "is a bit strange."

American series shown in Quebec, such as *Beverly Hills 90210* and *The Nanny* and the *Rebels*, are dubbed in international French, and Marone acknowledges it would have been cheaper for the networks to do an existing dub of the show from France. But the networks like a Quebecois version would work better. "It's a down with a lot of humorous touches," she says. And translating humor into international French, "doesn't make sense." *Seinfeld* and *The Cosby Show*, dubbed in France, both flopped in Quebec. But with more than one million viewers in the province last week, *Ally* is obviously popular in any season.

## The wonk award

Book awards are no longer the only place where wonks. Still, there was never any danger that the Ontario Canadian Book Awards' new \$25,000 prize—for best book on Canadian public policy—would get lost in the shuffle. It's a topic that may attract a lot of fans, but those who do care, care deeply. A lengthy

group of academics and mentors, including Bernard and Sylvia Ostry and John Goss, attended the inaugural ceremony in Toronto last week. Thomas Courchene, the Queen's University professor who won the prize for his book on changes in Ontario, *From Homestead to North American Region State*, said he welcomed the recognition for Canadian authors. Weeks, too, it seems, are decided typographically—as, write

## Falling for a kiss

Last week, Prime Minister Jean Chrétien joined the list of politicians whose tumblers in public have been caught on camera. Chrétien fell flat on his face while playing a game of pickup basketball with Kenyan athletes at Ontario's CFB Borden. The 46-year-old Prime Minister, who took two bumps before his topple, picked himself up, shook his head and continued to play. Chrétien, who blamed his mishap on his head-on collision, made his fall of it two days later, telling a group of brothers in Ottawa in the story of the media. "I kissed the floor like the Pope on behalf of the Madonna—and they said I fell."



## Passages

**Died:** Marcel Pélissier, 57, CBC's on-air host for French services, of a brain aneurysm, at his Montreal home. Pélissier, a respected journalist and writer, worked for several newspapers and magazines, including *Le Devoir*, *Le Presse* in Montreal and *Le Soleil* of Quebec City. President of Quebec's access to information commission from 1982 to 1987, he was appointed vice-president of CBC French radio in 1991. In March, he moderated CBC reporter Terry Milne's report on the APEC controversy.



**Died:** Acclaimed children's poet and songwriter, Noel Silberman, 66, of a heart attack, in Key West, Fla. His children's books included *A Light in the Air*, and he also wrote the hit 1968 song, *The Unicorn*, for the Canadian band, the Rushes.

**Died:** Gene Sarazen, 97, one of only five men to win all four of golf's major professional championships: the PGA Championship (three times), the U.S. Open (twice), the Masters and British Open, in Naples, Fla.

**Died:** Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Meg Greenfield, 68, of lung cancer, at her Washington home. Editorial page editor at *The Washington Post*, Greenfield was also co-author for *Newsweek* for the past 25 years.

**Died:** Artist and cartoonist Saul Steinberg, 44, in New York City. Steinberg's work has been published in *The New Yorker* magazine for half a century.

**Awards:** By donor Elton Sjöberg, 27, who he is leaving long-term coach Doug Leigh in Toronto. Leigh helped guide Sjöberg to three world titles, two Olympic silver medals and five Canadian senior championships.

**Released:** Amy Fries, 26, the so-called Long Island Lolita, from prison after serving seven years for shooting the wife of his former boss, Joey Battafione, in the back in Albany, N.Y.



Ailes: It's more than a war of words

## Clash of the celluloid titans

There was never much chance that Roger Ailes, the creative chairman of Fox's Fox Global Communications Corp., would lock wings from a bird. So when he was singled out for criticism last November by film and television producer Robert Laurent, in a speech awarded with contempt for Canada's private broadcasting sector, the question was not if, but when. Ailes would return fire. A May 17 speech at Toronto's Canadian Club seemed in good time as Ailes told *Absolutely* last week that he planned to pre-emptively win the favor of Canadian TV, but also to comment on Laurent's personal "false, unwarranted and very angry attack."

Laurent, speaking at Toronto's Ryerson Polytechnic University, argued that Canada's TV executives—Ailes was the only one named—do little to foster Canadian programming, despite being sheltered from U.S. competition by Ottawa. "They preach free-market economics for others," noted Laurent, "but they are the first to ask the shelter of government regulations." Ailes charges it's Laurent's attack of the lioness, with an reliance on money from federal film and television production funds, that is distorted. "Here is the mollycoddled and government-subsidized producer criticizing Canadian broadcasters," he fumed. "It's the height of hypocrisy." This is more than a war of words. Ailes is rating Laurent for \$7 million for defamation over his full speech.

## Explorer

### Net to go

Once tethered to a desktop computer by a telephone line, the Internet is starting to slip the leash. And 1999 is quickly becoming the year the Net goes wireless. Tired of people talking on their cellphones in restaurants or on the bus? That's nothing. The new generation of Web-capable phones will allow people to do their banking or answer e-mail whenever they go.

Last week, the Bank of Montreal announced the trial of a wireless financial service called View-Net, which will be available over cellphones from Bell Mobility. View-Net will allow clients to do their banking and get stock market quotes wherever they are. And Bell Mobility said users of digital phones capable of handling data will be able to access the Internet with a special Web browser.

*Phone and cell phone: Web access*



### Time and place

Remember the old days when people were watched rarely to tell time? They still perform that function admirably, of course, but these days a watch is more than just a watch—it has become a multipurpose gadget. There are bigger watches and watches that hold addresses in their databases. And now, a watch that tells you where you are

designed for the small screens found on cell phones. In the United States, US WEST announced that Web-linked cellphones from maker Alcatel will be available later this year for about \$300-\$400. The handset will include a colour screen and a removable keyboard.

But even-level Internet services will not be restricted to cellphones. 3Com Canada Inc., which makes the popular Palm hand-held computer, will soon selling a wireless Palm VII line this year (at a price expected to be just under \$1,200 for the unit, plus about \$20 a month for the service) that will allow access to information on the World Wide Web. This isn't quite Netscape on a chip. Instead, 3Com is working with content suppliers such as ABC, CNN and Dow Jones to provide searchable information such as headlines and stock quotes. Older versions of the Palm can be hooked up to a digital cellphone and then used with the funds of Microsoft's View server to view charts of stock market activity.

Despite the talk, no one has yet determined if wireless Internet service will turn out to be an example of a genuine technology that people don't really want. Telecommunications analyst George Karalis, associate director of the Brookline, Ont.-based consulting firm, Yankee Group in Canada, says there is no doubt that some people will find the new services attractive. "I'd like to be able to check my e-mail from my handset," he said as he spoke by cellphone from the back of a cab.

The question, he says, is how many people might want to be so highly connected. Still, he and other analysts expect wireless data services to explode, from about two per cent of cell-service users now to about 25 per cent as late as the year 2000.

Warren Gargano

Available this summer, the Casio GPS watchmaker that features a receiver for the Global Positioning Satellite system, which was developed by the U.S. government for navigation, surveying and mapping. The watch provides accurate latitude and longitude data and can also be used to store information on planned routes. Because the GPS satellites constantly send out time signals, this is one watch you'll never have to set. Expect to pay in the \$750 range

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## Opening Notes

### Best-Sellers

#### Fiction

1. **AN EQUAL MIND**, Victor Segal (2) 1
2. **EARL IN THE MOUNTAINS**, Louis L'Amour (2) 2
3. **YOUR WIFE: CHERRY 1—BIG FISHBONE MESSAGE**, Terry Southern (2) 3
4. **THE GARDEN**, Barbara Pym (2) 4
5. **THE LAST OF A LONG WALK**, John Murre (2) 5
6. **THE TOMBARDIER**, John Murre (2) 6
7. **THE GIRL WHO LIVED FOR SEVERAL**, Stephen King (2) 7
8. **THE GIRL WHO LIVED FOR SEVERAL**, Stephen King (2) 8

#### Nonfiction

1. **THE WINDMILL**, Thomas Mann (2) 1
2. **THE WINDMILL**, Thomas Mann (2) 2
3. **THE WINDMILL**, Thomas Mann (2) 3
4. **THE WINDMILL**, Thomas Mann (2) 4
5. **THE WINDMILL**, Thomas Mann (2) 5
6. **THE WINDMILL**, Thomas Mann (2) 6
7. **THE WINDMILL**, Thomas Mann (2) 7
8. **THE WINDMILL**, Thomas Mann (2) 8
9. **THE WINDMILL**, Thomas Mann (2) 9
10. **THE WINDMILL**, Thomas Mann (2) 10

Compiled by Susan Schaefer

## The hand that feeds

An edgy exploration of obsession and a critical look at the media industry. *Craving the Distance* (McClelland & Stewart) is a debut novel from someone who should know what he is talking about: Evan Solomon, co-founder of *Slyt* magazine and a CBC Newsweek program host, has crafted a tale of murder and media manipulation featuring a monstrous fanatic of himself. This would be Jake Jacobson, the handsome young boss with the silver tongue. As the novel opens, Jake's liver is shot, and he's the prize snapper. Meanwhile, his brother, Thane, a radical environmentalist, is wired in connection with the death of a loggie. Both are dodging police—and news crews—when they meet at their family's Georgian Bay cabin and embark on a trip through their shared past.



# Automotive Marketplace

ONTARIO

## The "Golden Age"

## of Canada's Automotive Industry

By Dennis DesRosiers



In my recent article, I have been attempting to explain the underlying factors involved in the automotive industry's structure in Canada, and to some extent, the United States and the global marketplace.

My reasons for doing this are to help consumers make better vehicle buying decisions by providing knowledge of the workings of the industry and understanding how today's consumers have more leverage than ever before. There are many factors working for consumers, from the high quality and long life of current vehicles, to the many financing arrangements available. Altogether, these conditions constitute an environment in which the car-buying public, to a large extent, can purchase a vehicle when they want, where they want and on favourable terms.

I sometimes hear the view expressed that the automotive industry in North America has come and gone. People say it is a so-

called mature or smokestack industry and that governments should back high-tech industries not the auto sector. Because of negative publicity about the decline of the industry, pollution problems, increasing vehicle rental costs, industry downsizing, increased manufacturing automation, etc., an impression seems to have been created that the automotive industry is in trouble. In fact, the reverse is true. Things have never been better for Canada's automotive industry, and one of the chief beneficiaries is the car-buying public. I would argue that we are in the Golden Age of the automotive industry in Canada and the industry still has a lot of upside potential.

An example of the negative image is the recent publicity surrounding General Motors' decision to lay off more than 1,000 workers at its St. Catharines, Ontario, engine plant. This, coupled with the fact that GM has cut back its workforce by more than 20,000 workers in the last





ally well, starting with the Auto Pact in 1965 which created a framework for building Canada's modern automotive industry.

Before the Auto Pact, in the early 1960s, we had a highly-protected, insulated sector of policies focused on trade protection and the U.S. was poised to take countervailing measures against Canadian trade policy. Ottawa negotiated the Auto Pact with the United States in order to avoid a trade war with the U.S. on automotive issues. What Ottawa had done in overall policy development is to take a moral position perspective towards a development of automotive levels that have had to be resolved over the years. The net result has been the creation of a high level of investment and many automotive sector jobs.

I believe the sinistest thing the bureaucrats in Ottawa did was to recognize that decisions about Canadian vehicle companies were made in foreign boardrooms, not in Canada. Ottawa has constantly sought to find an angle or entry point within these boardrooms which would give Canada some visibility and clout. There are a number of interesting examples where Canadian policy development significantly benefited the Canadian automotive sector and the country as a whole.

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#### PLACE OF MIND IN EVERY MODEL

Subaru Impreza and Subaru Legacy are two prime examples of style and substance combined with outstanding performance. The fact that Impreza was the World Rally Manufacturers' Champion in 1995, 1996 and 1997 is only

Free article

Each of these models - like all Subaru - features the horizontally opposed boxer engine, the same engine configuration used in the former Impreza and the Poshie 911. The boxer engine uses pistons that move horizontally instead of up and down. This provides smoother, more reliable, maintenance-free



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trance as well as a lower center of gravity which improves the vehicle's balance and stability when cornering. This feature affords the driver more control of the vehicle.

### ACTIVE AVOIDANCE

As well as the boat engine and Allshred Drive, Salunga also offer rack and pinion steering and 4-wheel independent suspension to ensure precise handling as well as a comfortable ride. And while most manufac-

3. When Renault needed FERA approval to buy AMC, the Canadian government made it a condition of approval that Renault build a plant in Canada. Then Chrysler bought AMC/Renault and the result has been a tremendous success story in their Brampton facility.

2. In the early 1980s, Chrysler came to the Canadian government needing help in a bailout package similar to what it had negotiated in the United States. Ottawa agreed to give Chrysler loan guarantees in exchange for the Chrysler minivan plant in Windsor — the most successful automotive plant ever built in Canada and possibly in North America.

3. In order to avoid severe import restrictions and inspections on vehicles imported from Japan, Ottawa convinced both Toyota and Honda to build plants in Canada. Each of these plants will produce more than 200,000 vehicles this year.



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Spencer, the network, among its affiliates.

[illegible]

These are only three examples of Ottawa's intervention, but I would strongly argue that with every vehicle assembly plant in Canada, the Canadian government has had a significant role in getting the plant built.

In Canada we have a number of key competitive advantages which benefit the automotive and other manufacturing industries:

- The value of the Canadian dollar
- A highly skilled workforce
- Our Medicare program
- Our infrastructure (such as hydro, abundant resources and our trade portlines network).

We also have a number of competitive advantages that favour Canada, particularly in the automotive sector.

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• Our mould-making industry has the benefit of feedstocks coming out of Sarnia, creating a world-class plastic automotive parts industry.

• Our low-cost energy combines with an abundance of natural resources such as aluminum and magnesium to create a world-class automotive forging and casting industry.

All of the above factors have created an automotive industry in Canada which is environmentally friendly, has plenty of room for growth and which is very high-tech. The Canadian automotive industry is alive and well and booming with activity.

For the consumer the result is an automotive industry now producing highly technically advanced vehicles, with longer life than ever before, high trade-in values, a philosophy of continuous automotive product improvement, and a competitive atmosphere with many consumer options at the retail level.

One in seven jobs in Canada is tied directly or indirectly to the automotive sector. What better way to help consumers than to give them a job.

#### Top 10 Selling Light Trucks - First Quarter 1999

|                             |        |
|-----------------------------|--------|
| 1. Ford F-Series            | 17,727 |
| 2. Cadillac Escalade/Blazer | 15,421 |
| 3. Ford Bronco              | 12,520 |
| 4. Chrysler Durango         | 12,274 |
| 5. Chevy Venture            | 9,018  |
| 6. Plymouth Voyager         | 8,948  |
| 7. Ford Taurus Pickups      | 8,889  |
| 8. Ford Explorer            | 8,578  |
| 9. Chevy/SAC Jimmy/Blazer   | 8,564  |
| 10. Chevy/SAC Astro/Safari  | 4,987  |

#### Top 10 Selling Cars - First Quarter 1999

|                       |        |
|-----------------------|--------|
| 1. Chevrolet Cavalier | 12,264 |
| 2. Pontiac Stratus    | 10,510 |
| 3. Toyota Corolla     | 7,415  |
| 4. Honda Civic Sedan  | 7,030  |
| 5. Ford Taurus        | 6,478  |
| 6. Pontiac Grand Am   | 6,540  |
| 7. Chrysler Intrepid  | 5,113  |
| 8. Chevrolet Malibu   | 5,424  |
| 9. Mazda Protege      | 4,957  |
| 10. Honda Accord      | 4,927  |



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With Volvo's solid reputation for safety-engineering and value, it's easy to overlook the fact that Volvo can also build for driving enjoyment. For instance, the turbocharged GLT and T5 versions of the S70 sedan and V70 Sportswagon display all the virtues of world-class driver's cars.

Start and foremost in the world of driving fun is the important matter of power. S70 and V70 GLTs both use an eager 190-horsepower turbocharged 20-valve five-cylinder engine that produces much of its substantial torque in the low- to mid-rev range, giving the GLTs extra authority when moving through traffic and running tight country roads. S70 and V70 T5s, on the other hand, are just plain fast. They pack the 236-horsepower version of the same smooth five-cylinder turbo engine, producing huge thrust in any segment from low-speed hauling to maintaining a satisfying pace on the highway.

Of course, there's more to driving pleasure than pure speed. GLT and T5 models are designed for superb handling and impressive braking ability. In addition, an extensive list of equipment and luxurious appointments - such as power glass sunroof, 8-way power seating and remote entry with alarm - ensures both cars give maximum value.

Moreover, Volvo retailers are currently adding still other dimensions to the driving pleasure built into these Volvo cars. Until June 30, 1999, retailers are offering a special 3.8% lease rate on S70 and V70 GLT and T5 models equipped with the Touring Package of extra features: stability/traction control, leather interior and - on T5s - sport chassis, 3-CD sound system, rear spoiler and wood- and stainless steel trim.

Whether it's the horsepower of their turbo engines or the financial power of their attractive 3.8% lease rate, these Volvo S70s and V70s are strong performers, indeed.



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\*Owner's lease on GLT models, both first lease on T5 models. S70 GLT shown. Limited time offer available until June 30, 1999 through participating Volvo dealers and Volvo Financial Services on approved credit 12-qualified retail customers only. Begins September 1st, 1999. Example based on the 1999 Volvo S70 GLT with Touring Package, with \$21,500.00 + \$1500.00 down, payment as requested lease (\$191 / \$679) + \$415.00 per month, 36 month term ending \$20,200 + \$21,500.00. Payment at end of lease for \$2,811.25. Freight at \$495. PDI at \$195. taxes, license and insurance not. First month's payment and security deposit required. Leases less 20,000 km per year otherwise \$50 / km in excess. Residual may mean for less. ©1999 Volvo Cars of Canada Ltd. "Volvo for life" is a trademark of Volvo Cars of Canada Ltd. Always remember to wear your seat belt. Visit [www.volvocanada.com](http://www.volvocanada.com)

### Another View



Charles Gordon

## Much ado about violence

In the first days after the horrific shootings at Littleton, Colo., and Taber, Alta., the experts spoke, the op-ed shows and letters-to-the-editor pages were deluged, and the following emerged as the things to blame for the tragedies: parents, computers, the media, the Internet, guns, the free-love generation, gun control, the bombing of Serbia, large schools, the movie *The Matrix*, competitiveness, conformity, the movie *The Basketball Diaries*, the loss of family values, education cutbacks, the rocker Marilyn Manson, violence on television, bullying in school, the rock group KMFDM; the newspaper coverage of firearms, the 40,000 killings children will see on television and in the movies by the time they are 18, video, books, the lack of censorship in schools, the movie *Natural Born Killers*.

Not as many possible solutions were available, although some of them were creative, such as the suggested playing of a song called *Don't Fear Guns* by the vintage Canadian rock group April Wine.

Merely listing the positive causes shows how broad and inescapable are the influences to which kids (as well as adults) are subjected in this complicated and violent age. And merely reading the list should demonstrate that no single factor can be blamed. Various influences cause together, either to create a mood, or to give an evil decision to a mind that is already twisted.

So the question is what are we doing to drive people crazy? And how do we stop it?

It is clear that the question of censoring comes the closest, sometimes raised by well-meaning citizens who fear the impact of strong lyrics, photographic books and magazines, violent movies and TV programs, and sometimes raised by people who are simply uncomfortable with modern means of expression and will use any pretext as an excuse to roll back the clock.

But with the multitude of potential influences at work, it should be clear that no single book, no single song, no single movie can be shown (or have caused) an evil act. The only reason that cause the machines have to be blamed, too. Merely taking away the book, movie or song will not solve anything.

The censors are looking up the wrong tree. Sometimes, in fact, the most violent words can be shown to have moral value, because they help us to understand violence. This is not to say that they all have value. The anti-censorship forces sometimes blind us to a trap of their own making by treating something as good as merely because an attempt is being made to suppress it. They then wind up having to defend the indefensible, rather than merely having to defend the principle

an organization devoted to defending freedom of expression around the world. The novel takes the form of a woman's letters to the imprisoned Paul Bernardo, the letters expressing freely and often graphically an themes and details brought out in the trial of the sex murderer and multiple rapist. Writing in *The Globe and Mail*, Doug Saunders said that "true supporters of free speech, after all, must support more staunchly those words that they most dread." Most people accept that thought, which has been reflected in most of the big freedom of expression cases in recent memory. To defend freedom of expression, it has been necessary to defend Ernst Zündel and Larry Flynt.

There's another thought that you don't have often enough when the issue of freedom of expression arises. It is that those who defend freedom of expression have an obligation to promote quality of expression as well. Censorship and books may be necessary, but let's not, in the process, let ourselves that they are good books. Larry Flynt may have every right to publish *Mein*, but the world is not necessarily a better place because he does. Readers can refuse to buy it and writers can refuse to write for it (neither anyone's freedom being compromised).

Back at the PEN gala, *The Globe and Mail* writer speculated that "even the people who walked our world fully support Lynn Coombs's right to publish and distribute her novel." That's an accurate statement that, in a democracy, the right to publish and distribute is not seriously questioned and should be vigorously supported. But to assert that is not to say that every novel deserves publication, every song deserves recording, every movie deserves distribution.

Should *Natural Born Killers* have been suppressed? Of course not. Should it have been filmed in the first place? That's a better question. The question applies to quite a bit of mass culture at this time in history. You don't have to accept the argument that movies cause murders to agree that a lot of truly horrible movies are being made. The same goes for books and songs.

The publishers and studios and those who create the products they market cannot pretend that what they put out has no impact. Those who defend freedom of expression should also demand the production of words that are worthy of being defended. The law is not an easy one to draw, nor should the power to draw it be concentrated in a few hands. All artists should have it, and use it.

# The Second Coming

As the newest  
Star Wars film illustrates,  
pop culture has  
become a new religion

By Brian D. Johnson

A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away—far 1970s California—the known universe of George Lucas came into being. In the beginning, George created *Star Wars*. And the screen was without form, and void. And George said, Let there be light, and there was Industrial Light and Magic. And George divided the light from the darkness, with lightshows, and called the darkness the Evil Empire. And George made the Hollywood businessmen, and sold. Let the revenues be gathered together under one place. And he called it Skywalker Ranch. And George said, Let the revenues bring forth abundant special effects. And George [for his musical] created every living creature that movie, the

Duelling with Aghma in *The Phantom Menace*; below: Wookies and Ewoks and Jawas in *Star Wars*; the Lucas of the earth in *Indiana Jones* and every digitally dressed man, woman and child in *Titanic*. And George saw that it was good.

So he did it again, as it was in the beginning. You could see it coming a long way off, like a meteor the size of Texas on a collision course with Earth in a Hollywood disaster flick. And now it is upon us: the Second Coming of George Lucas. By now, everyone knows that *Star Wars: Episode I—The Phantom Menace* is not just a movie. It is *The Movie*, the most

monstrously hyped piece of entertainment in history. In the end, like an evangelist prophet heling his bees, Lucas tried to soften the expectation, suggesting that his movie, in fact, is just a movie. "A Saturday afternoon serial for children." Who is he trying to kid? Even if *The Phantom Menace* does not seth *Titanic*'s record in the final week of the millennium—even if its worldwide box office fails to top \$1.8 billion (U.S.)—it has already generated more belief than any picture before it.

The *Star Wars* franchise—with its ever-expanding universe of videos, toys and merchandising—is so big, it is almost beyond money. To hear Lucas talk, it sounds as if nothing has





president of MCA, he sat in his office atop Universal City's famous Black Tower and recalled Steven Spielberg walking into that very office with a script about an alien Christ figure called *E.T.* "When *E.T.* was first presented in Houston, remembered Spielberg, "it was not a preview in any metropolitan area of the world. It was as if one had experienced a kind of ceremonial-dramatic-religious experience. I've never seen anything like it."

Back then, MCA was known as the Octopus, the most soulless of Hollywood's studio machines. But that did not prevent Spielberg from using the selling power of faith. "The ads for *E.T.*," he said, "were very controversial—why were we selling this picture with a kind of *Sinner* Chapel? But I loved the religiosity." What distinguishes a megahit from a mere blockbuster, he added, is the spiritual dimension. "The religious have to really touch people deeply, and sometimes it isn't even knowable how they touch people. It is knowable in *E.T.*, it's much less knowable with *Star Wars*."

In the 1990s, the business of touching people deeply has taken off. With New Age ministries serving as personal trainers for the human spirit, more people have found a home in the consumer society. Self-help books draw cultural equations between effluence and holiness—proclaiming a philosophy that could be called transcendental accumulation: pop guru Deepak Chopra goes so far as to suggest that "money is life energy...." Meanwhile, pop godfather, from Madonna



Lucas, above, likely 'a Sunday afternoon serial for children'

one of science fiction's favorite nightmares is that artificial intelligence will fall into the wrong hands, or fall out of her man hands altogether.

In *The Matrix*, machines destroy civilization and enslave the human race, keeping it wired to a digital dream world—virtual reality to the opium of the masses. With Keanu Reeves cast as the Saviour, the One chosen to deliver humanity from bondage, *The Matrix* is full of biblical allusion. In fact, Rev. Joel Osteen, a Lutheran pastor in Fort Worth, Tex., was so taken by it that he announced he would work it into his sermons and confirmation classes. "You have all the elements there," says Osteen, "the Messiah, the heroism, Mary Magdalene. There are many layers. If you're a Zen Buddhist, it's about personal enlightenment."

*The Matrix*, with its hero in a black trench coat and its beguiling fountain of gunfire, has also been cited as a possible influence on the war responsible for the Lirionan massacre. But blaming a particular film, or film, for such deeply deranged actions seems dubious at best. The resonance of the religious images denoting the world with firepower is one of Hollywood's most durable myths, stretching from *The Book of Moses* (1915) to *Top Gun* (1986). In a Christian culture so saturated with violent salvation—and attuned to the work both on- and off-screen—American culture directing of violence destruction may simply be the other side of the coin.

*Star Wars* is a saga of warrior princes—mythical knights in spandex robes. And evergreen was one of the earliest forms of American show business. With the spiritualization of pop culture, the business of selling popcorn may have found its ultimate incarnation. Lucas, meanwhile, seeks to complete his creation with the purring direction of a Renaissance artist happily employed by the Pope. With effects beyond the digital break break, milking machines, he says, is becoming more and more like painting. But his *Star Wars* ceiling is spread across thousands of screens, and unfathomable to the day the stained glass of countless media, is unbreakable to the day. The Force is with us whether we like it or not.

Web Sites: [www.starwars.com](http://www.starwars.com)



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# 1999: A Space Oddity

*The Phantom Menace* is a curious mix of kiddie pop and cool

By Andrew Clark

The news media began covering Frank Bianco just minutes after he arrived outside New York City's majestic Ziegfeld Theatre. He—and 249 other *Star Wars* faithful—had first congregated near the movie palace on May 1, hoping to secure tickets to the May 19 official opening of *Star Wars Episode I—The Phantom Menace*. So Bianco, a 28-year-old writer and indie courier, finds nothing exceptional about yet another journalist—a Canadian this time—nostril around. Talk turns to the "Force," which to Bianco means "everything even stuff out." Then the reporter makes an odd request, asking Bianco and another fan to pick a number between one and 10. Bianco guesses eight. His choice fits red as he promises the information—the reporter has an extra pass to a media preview of *The Phantom Menace* that night.

"You got it?"  
The climax of 16 years of waiting—and 117 hours in line—is now just a seven-block walk away. Two hours later, the words "A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away..." appear on the screen. The six-globe event and even the Jedi journalist cheer, just as audiences will do doubt their last week when one of the most anticipated movies in history opens nationwide. *The Phantom Menace* has been so hyped that its creator held a news conference to play down the publicity. "We have tried very hard not to let it get overhyped," says George Lucas, not terribly convincingly. "But it kind of got out of control." So it has: a barrage of articles, TV promos and merchandise (Bianco already owns a trio of *Phantom Menace* scene figures); three generations of moviegoers have been sitting with salivary glands in overdrive. There are the six-year-olds, drawn by commercials and product tie-ins; the Gen-X fans, like Bianco, who grew up on Lucas's imaginary universe; and the 50-year-olds, to whom *Star Wars* was a mind-blowing experience. Samuel L. Jackson (now Jedi Master

Mace Windu), now the 1977 original looped by the efforts of a few buns and the contents of a rickety bag of nutmegs. "When it went into hyperspace, we were off," he recalls. "We were the people who said, 'You've got to go see this movie, man, and I'll go with you.'"

Back then, it was Luke, Leia, Han, Obi-Wan, Darth Vader, Chewbacca and the Death Star. *The Phantom Menace* is set in a full generation earlier, long before Luke is a glint in Darth Vader's awestruck eye. This time around, the heroes are two Jedi knights on their way to settle a trade dispute on the peaceful planet of Naboo. Jedi Qui-Gon Jinn (Lucas himself) and his apprentice, a young Obi-Wan Kenobi (Ewan McGregor), aim to break up a Trade Federation blockade of Naboo. In Queens, Arvidsola (Nicole Portman), fears an invasion and hopes that the Jedi can find a nonviolent solution for her planet's precarious situation. But finer than Jinn can say "Mind the living Force," trouble is unleashed. A phantom senator is engineering an evil master plan that threatens the entire galaxy.

Jinn and Obi-Wan Kenobi head off to Naboo to save the queen. Along the way they befriend Jar Jar



Nelson, Lloyd McGregor with R2-D2, Jar Jar in New York (below) a host of spiritual quest themes disseminated in computer art

Binks, a jovial amphibian, and convenient underlings world. Their quest takes them to the desert planet Dantooine, where they assist a nine-year-old slave boy named Anakin Skywalker (Jake Lloyd). Jinn senses that the precocious youngster (who is destined to become Darth Vader) is blessed with a heaping helping of the Force, making him one of the most holy creatures in existence. And so, Anakin leaves his dutiful mother to become a Jedi apprentice. The bond of space between head-offers the galaxy determined to vanquish evil and restore balance to the Force.

It's a plot so corny you could butter it and invite 1,000 of your closest friends over for a picnic. But hey, this is *Star Wars* movie and *Star Wars* movies cannot be judged like other films. And even when reviewers say, *Star Wars* flicks are unapologetic to critical attacks. The previous three, *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*, weathered disapprovals and then hit blockbuster status. To succeed, a *Star Wars* movie must do three simple things. It must:

- have groundbreaking special effects,
- have a rip-roaring, no-holds-barred cinematic quest,
- and be cool.

Special effects-wise, *The Phantom Menace* is a force to be reckoned with. The movie is a wild, digitally enhanced meditation on chase scenes, including one that plays like a space version of a NASCAR rally, an especially riveting. The sci-fi designs and costumes are mindboggling rich. Many of the landscapes, in-

cludes even characters, such as Jar Jar, were computer-generated. In all, 35 per cent of the frames in the movie were computer-generated. These high-tech efforts were marked with the screen's low-budget work. In many scenes, the cars positioned before blue-screen backdrops that allowed Lucas to place whatever images he wished in the final cut. The result is the most fully realized fictional universe ever created on-screen. "It is weird," says Portman, "to watch yourself walking around in places you've never been."

As a piece of cinematic storytelling, however, *The Phantom Menace* is about as potent as a lightbulb with its baroque filling. The dialogue and the flash-bout scenes of refined mythology (including a new-age anatomical metaphor) caused some in the preview audience to collapse into unavoidable laughter. At one point, Jedi master Yoda discusses passively: "Fear is the path to the dark side."

Previous *Star Wars* movies employed a straightforward pedal-to-the-metal storytelling approach. Audiences followed Luke on his quest for glory. The chaos and high-stakes duels kept viewers glued to the screen and the Force's mysticism imbued the movie with a sense of grandeur. What's more, the symbolism had endless resonance. Small wonder that a 1970s audience living in constant fear of nuclear war was identified when Luke (the everyman) destroyed the Death Star (the symbol of nuclear destruction). But *The Phantom Menace* breaks this model. It is a throwback to Lucas's 1973





non-sci-fi movie, *American Graffiti*, which used a crucifix of concertgoers' photos. But this technique is hampered by the cast of *The Phantom Menor*, whose acting is competent but never inspired. McGregg, for example, previously disappears from the film. Lucas fails to keep all the balls in the air and his worst *Star Wars* soundtrack comes off more like a belated historical epic than a near-budding adventure.

But that is nit-picking, especially in films. The first weeks out of Blockbuster to the movie ends and the credit roll say: "I feel like I'm 6 again." Later, he admits the plot's weak points (it's his film). He says that the crazy Jar Jar character, the good-natured but dim-witted sidekick will annoy die-hard fans, who will consider it a "lubrication" of the movie. "I was a little disappointed," says Bianco, "but I know I might be. Overall I loved it, the effects were incredible."

In other words, the cool factor has registered. Cool, in this sense, is leaving earth and creating a world of wonder, in which good and evil are clearly defined. Up to age 10, it is easy to do. When you're 28 and working two jobs, it's more challenging in line for *Avatar* when director of *Star Wars* he would like on earth. Bianco poses a moment and then replies: "Good question and." In New York, or anywhere else, that's not always the case. Not does *Star Wars* seem that fantastic when compared with a world in which one group of people live up for weeks to escape ethnic cleansing while thousands of miles



Waiting in line to *Star Wars* three generations of moviegoers proved by all the legs

away, another group waits weeks in line to watch a movie. It's enough to make the fairy-tale world of *Star Wars* comforting. "Maybe just stops and there is something else but that world you're in with the characters," says Bianco. "You don't have to worry about anything for the next two hours and 20 minutes. The 16 years between the movies just collapsed."

At the clock pushes midnight, Bianco scrolls back to the Ziegfeld—to join the queue. "I thought, after I saw the movie, I wouldn't want to wait in line anymore. But hearing the cheers, I want to share that with the people in line." He expects to get at least 12 opening night tickets and he means to give them to friends and their kids. "I really believe in the balance thing. I got lucky and I want to pass that on to someone else." In silhouette against the stage lights, with his long microphone blowing in a gentle breeze, Bianco cues a Jack-like figure. Like a real knight, bound by honour and duty, he is keeping his word. Frank Bianco will be with his people when this final day comes and the world sees the space-age Hollywood splendour it has already been his privilege to behold. ■

## Toying with the Force

Buy a burrito at Taco Bell—and get the Anakin Skywalker Transformer. Bank At KFC, the Jar Jar Binks Square comes with the Colonel's bucket. And that is only the beginning: hundreds of different *Phantom Menor*-branded toys and books are arriving in stores on May 3, to be greeted by trophy hunters and midnight-crowd sales. There is the Queen Amidala bicycle helmet (\$24), a goe-dribbling Jabba the Hut doll (\$25) and the Darth Maul affordable chair (\$29). The Force is with us, and will be at least until after Christmas shopping is done.

The fast food to-ins are part of a \$2.5

billion licensing agreement Pepsi signed with Lucasfilm, the production company of director George Lucas, in 1976 for all *Star Wars* sequel and merchandising rights. The results are also contributing to the main hysteria. Some 3,500 outlets have appeared in print (this presumably includes 3,901) and V&A-1, the



Star Wars merchandise made the moviegoers



Sharon Dool

American video stores, provided the four-trillion video of John Williams' score for a full hour.

But appear eager to buy in. Lucas and Fox, the film distributors, had originally wanted to wait until opening day to start selling tickets. But ever longer lines threatened per-dominance, and, last week, advance tickets were on sale (across Canada, 175,000 tickets were bought in the first day). Lucas' decision to limit the film release to 3,000 hand-picked theaters will keep the demand high. Of the 140 theaters showing the film in Canada, 28 will run the movie non-stop for 24 hours starting at 12:01 a.m. on May 19.

Such early screenings may help *The Phantom Menor* recoup its \$148-million price tag. And if the target audience, 10- to 30-year-old males with film fixations, recalls the theater is often in pre-occupied, *Phantom Menor* could go on to gross more than \$1 billion. In that case, Lucas would pocket \$460 million—enough to buy himself a couple of \$145,000 Special Edition Star Wars Huzzams.



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# Mulroney takes aim

Outspoken as always, the former prime minister is proving that living very well is the best revenge

By Anthony Wilson-Smith

**Brian Mulroney** can't stop laughing. Smiling into the well-upholstered couch in his seventh-floor, downtown Montreal law office, he is trying to read out loud from a glossy report—but keeps breaking into guffaws. At first, the object of his merriment seems curious: a brochure put out by International Trade Minister Sergio Marchi. In it, Marchi is quoted as celebrating the "unqualified success" of the North American Free Trade Agreement. "The problem is that the brochure celebrates 'five years of NAFTA'—and ignores its forerunner, the Free Trade Agreement with the United States, put in place by Mulroney's Progressive Conservatives. In fact, it makes no mention at all of the Tories. Nor does it acknowledge that Marchi was, in the 1988 election campaign, one of the most vocal opponents of free trade. "Ah, those Liberals," says Mulroney, winking his eyes before adding, occasionally: "Such elegance on policy remains can only come from people with vast experience in the area."

Say this for Brian Mulroney: he sometimes forgives, but he

never forgets an attempt to chip away at his political legacy. But by far, he is ending his self-imposed seclusion from the public eye. In addition to a recent 90-minute interview with *Maclean's*, Mulroney will appear at a high-level conference marking 10 years of free trade hosted by McGill University's Institute for the Study of Canada on June 4 and 5. Other guests include former U.S. president George Bush, former U.S. secretary of state Jim Baker, and business executives ranging from Laurent Beaudrin, the chairman of Bombardier Inc., to Charles Simis, the chief executive officer of Teleglob Inc. "It's our chance," Mulroney jokes, "to speak one more time before the Liberals overthrow us out of history."

Mulroney, who turned 60 in March, does not watch Question Period any more, and says he "probably could not clearly" name ministers in the present government. But, other habits remain. "The guy has the most impressive Rolodex I've ever seen," says his friend and sometime media adviser Luc Lavoie. "He always knows what everybody's up to." Mulroney

spends hours at the telephone, networking with chums who range from Quebec Liberal Leader Jean Charest—one of his former cabinet ministers—and former British prime ministers John Major and Margaret Thatcher to Bush and, occasionally, Bill Clinton. ("I was in a limousine in New York a while ago when the phone rang, and it was Clinton," he recalls. "I had to say I'd call back when I got a more secure phone.")

On the dark side, there is the undisclosed, ongoing war of words and wit with Prime Minister Jean Chrétien. The two men, as always, loathe each other. For Mulroney, the cause is the Airbus Affair, in which he spent 14 months fighting the government to clear his name of allegations that he took kickbacks in Air Canada's 1988 purchase of Airbus jets. In January, 1997, the government apologized, and agreed to pay his legal fees and other related costs.

Mulroney, who insists he is "not bitter, but deeply wounded" by the incident, believes that the Prime Minister, among other things, allowed the investigation into the charges to linger far

political gain. "If such an accusation had been made about a predecessor when I was in office, I would have said, 'Give me proof in 24 hours, or I'll fire everyone involved with this,'" says Mulroney. "But that guy, he didn't care about his wife and children. He knew I'm an honest man." (In response, an adviser to the Prime Minister said: "We are now in a debating the issue. Mr. Mulroney is free to express his views.")

In fact, the two men's antagonism is relatively recent. Through the 1970s and first half of the 1980s, Mulroney and Chrétien were well-acquainted associates who went on at least one group fishing trip together and shared some close social ties. (Chrétien's daughter France is married to André Desautels, son of one of Mulroney's closest friends.) When Chrétien quit politics in 1986 to join an Ottawa law firm, Mulroney says he "put out the word it was OK to do business with his firm. Ottawa is such a company town that without that, I thought he'd be cooked." The breakdown came in 1990 in the drying days of the Meech Lake accord. Chrétien, running for



the Liberal leadership, was uneasy with it. In the aftermath, Chretien was vilified in Quebec and he, in turn, blamed Mulroney for "opening up to the separatists."

Now, Mulroney cites a litany of slights. Although he was a leading figure in Commonwealth affairs to get South Africa to renounce apartheid, Mulroney was not part of the Canadian delegation under Charles for Nelson Mandela's inauguration in 1994. When Jordan's King Hussein died earlier this year, Mulroney was not invited to join the Canadian delegation—although he and wife Milla were such good friends of the Jordanian ruler that they were among about 100 people invited to the 20th wedding anniversary celebration in June 1998, of Hussein and his wife, Queen Noor. "We lack the negotiation traditions that other countries put forward to the rest of the world," says Mulroney. "And that won't change under this guy." But, he adds, slipping in a dig, "I bet it will when Paul [Mulroney] takes over."

Today, Mulroney appears finer and arguably younger than when he announced his resignation in February 1993. Longtime close friend Jonathan Denchak, a Montreal investment banker, was on vacation with Mulroney that year. One night, he recalls, "Brian talked about how tough it was to try to hard-



In his office, relaxed, rested and ready for almost anything—except a comeback.

ventured group in Palm Springs that included second producer David Foster and former talk-show host and humorist Merv Griffin.

In his personal life, Mulroney says, "Milla and I find more blessed than ever." Of their four children, the youngest, Nicolas, 15, remains with them in their Westmount home. Two others—Caroline, 26, and Mark, 28—are studying in the United States while Ben, 23, is finishing his second year of law at Mulroney's alma mater, Loyola University. The family spend major holidays together—often at a home Mulroney bought several years ago in Palm Beach, Fla. Later this summer, they are going on safari in South Africa at the invitation of Mandela.

Some resentment from his years in politics Mulroney is convinced that his unpopularity was driven by the "English-language Ottawa media who didn't like me because they were opposed to my agenda." That group, he says, gives Chretien "the widest coverage of any prime minister in history." But there are signs his antipathy towards Ottawa life is softening. Asked whether he would encourage his children if they wanted to enter politics, he answers "absolutely"—and volunteers that Caroline "would be a natural." And though Mulroney confesses Pierre Trudeau's condemnation of the Munich Locker accident "is better," he wrote him a sympathy note after the aviator's death of Trudeau's son Michel, and received a letter in return.

Now, Mulroney is relaxed, rested and ready for almost anything—except a political comeback. Some time ago, he says, he made a "particularly opinionated" statement by Chretien and reminded to Milla that it was enough to make him vomit in politics. When the dad's answer, he realized he had stepped in hot tracks, so he added innocently: "Did you hear me, dad?" Milla beamed and answered: "I'm sure you and your son-in-law will have a great time then." The story finished, Mulroney laughs, then adds: "Of course, I have no intention of coming back." After another pause, he continues, jabbing the air for emphasis: "But if I did, this guy in the Prime Minister's Office would laugh for a week—and chance I'd make be finally had some real opposition on his hands." Filing that, he says, evenally well constrains Brian Mulroney's best message. ■

## Mulroney remains convinced that his unpopularity was driven by the English-language Ottawa media

and he so unpopular. He said he took solace that he'd done the right thing, with a bit of bitterness. Now, Mulroney has lost weight, along with the puff, looked like he'd lost in his final Ottawa days—and again during the Airbus ordeal. He plays tennis, ski and has taken up golf. "Dimes," says Denchak, "is the happiest I have known him get." "Dimes," says Denchak, "is the happiest I have known him get." He is also a rich man—the result of doing on close to two dozen boards of directors and advisory groups worldwide, working as "consultant" or senior partner at the law firm of Ogilvy Renault, and giving speeches at \$75,000 an appearance. As a corporate director, Mulroney was once "Brian" has chosen boards where he can really contribute—because he'd be hired to assist being a yes-man," says Stanley Hurn, his former chief of staff who is chairman of Solomon Smith Barney Inc. investment bankers. Peter Mack, who has controlled interest in Barrick Gold and Tharco-Hahn—two Mulroney directorships—says: "There is nothing Brian can't do. He knows everyone anywhere."

That is reflected in Mulroney's travel schedule. In one recent three-day period, he flew to the University of Southern California to give a lecture, then went to New York City for a board meeting, then returned to California to meet an in-

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Berke: activists are trying to make the environment an election campaign issue

Berke's, "but they don't have the resources. I've seen a lot of people, who for years have tried their best for the environment, as heartbreakers."

Others have taken notice. Ontario was once one of the leading North American jurisdictions in protecting the environment. Now, for two years running, it has placed third, just behind Texas and Louisiana, in the annual ranking of North America's worst polluting states and provinces (Ontario is likely to place second as third is the next ranking, due in July). Earlier this month, Paul Taitto, head of the New York state assembly's energy committee, and the New York state branch of the American Lung Association, sent letters to Harris complaining that feeble Ontario energy regulations are contributing to health problems and air pollution in their state (in Ontario, the provincial medical association says that air pollution causes 1,800 Ontarians to die prematurely each year). Legitt, meanwhile, produced a stinging report last month, stating that the province is "moving away from better environmental protection," ignoring, among other things, pollution prevention—especially in hazardous waste.

Environment Minister Norma Sterling simply says Legitt is "wrong"—and that Ontario's land, water and air are cleaner than when the Conservatives came to power in 1995. Complaints from south of the border notwithstanding, the Tories point to their commitment to cleaner air as a sign they take the environment seriously. On April 1, the government launched Drive Clean, a program designed to cut car (and as of Sept. 1, trucks and buses) emissions, vehicles that fail are required to undergo repairs or lose their licenses.

But the program has been criticized for being unreliable. Dan McDermott, director of the OurAir Campaign, a coalition promoting clean air, says increasing public concern, reducing urban sprawl and, quite significantly, cutting back emissions from coal-fired power-generating stations would do more for the environment. Instead, the Tories have cut the environment ministry's budget by 63 per cent (to \$194 million), leading to a 32-per-cent reduction in staff and, consequently, a drop in environmental fine collections, to \$854,000 in 1998 from more than \$3 million in 1995. Industries have been encouraged to monitor themselves—which one of

the province's fine environmental watchdogs, Allen Babin, equates to "going moments to fill out every time they speak."

Even more damning, say environmental ministry bureaucrats, is a confidential 406-page document, prepared by ministry officials and called "Delivery Strategies," which advised employees last year to ignore hundreds of indications, from reports of bad drinking water to the illegal dumping of sewage from pleasure boats. Says one ministry official about the document, which was destroyed by McDermott: "It doesn't jibe with coming down to earth."

One of the main conservative environmental backdrops has been the Niagara Escarpment. When the Conservatives came to power in 1995, most members of the party wanted to abolish the 17-member Niagara Escarpment Commission—entrusted with protecting the last continuous escarpment in southern Ontario, a stretch that includes 1,000-year-old trees, rare flowers and rocky cliffs from Niagara Falls to Tonawanda on Georgian Bay. Instead, say the commission's critics, was a pen stroke

and it was saved quickly because the United Nations had designated the escarpment a protected landscape in 1990. But Sterling's predecessor, Brenda Eby, ignored the commission's advice and decided to expand working yards on escarpment land, permit radio towers and allow quarries to become industrial dumps. Then in the spring of 1998, Harris fired many scientists with development-interest appointments.

The results are glaring, critics charge. A January decision to allow a 96-unit condo-style resort on the select world-viewing lands in Vineland, east of Hamilton, annoyed commission member Robert Boschi, an architect and University of Guelph professor who was appointed under NDP Premier Bob Rae and reappointed under Harris. "Our goal of trying to protect a jewel has been replaced by a pro-business ethos," he Boschi. "It's death by a thousand cuts." He is also concerned that developers who have been turned down by a previous government are returning with even more greenhouse ideas, such as an unprecedented at-

tempt to take land out of escarpment commission control for a subdivision in Milton, Ont.

Harris has tried to win over critics' sensibilities with his Lands for Life program, which will set aside a huge tract, much of it in northern Northern Ontario, for preservation. But critics claim the province has not been up front about the deals going missing and forestry companies across the lands. Nor has the Harris government published its hopes to increase annual savings from the sale of Crown land, to \$200 million this year from \$6 million a year.

Conservationist Legitt says the sale of these lands, much of them "environmentally sensitive," is part of what the calls a penny-wise and pound-foolish approach to the environment. "Boschi has a healthy economy as a healthy society," she said, "without a healthy environment." Sterling counters with the observation that the struggling state of the former Soviet bloc left behind a wasteland "because their economy wasn't strong—you can't have a healthy environment if you don't have a healthy economy, too." ■

## Open for business

Environmentalists take issue with Ontario's new ethos

By John Nicol

**Osprey Links** is a golf course and housing development on Lake Nipissing, in the town of Callander where Ontario Premier Mike Harris grew up. The 200 hectares, which house an osprey nest and at above average wildlife spawning grounds, are being developed by some of Harris's best friends, and in early 1998 their subdivision application was held up by the ministry of natural resources because of environmental concerns. But "Ontario is open for business," as Harris vowed after the Conservatives' 1995 election victory, and an agent for the owners convinced Finance Minister Ernie Eves, the MPP for the area. Last March, the housing ministry approved the development without the resource ministry's blessing—and without its concerns about the development's potential effects on

the spawning grounds being satisfied.

The story is typical of the province's new ethos. And the Tories' pro-business approach is not limited to what critics say is an unprecedented weakening and dismantling of Ontario's environmental laws and institutions. The province's Red Tape Commission has been badly cutting away at the rules of regulations that govern economic activity. But activists say the effect has been particularly noticeable in the environmental sector—and it is a theme they are trying to introduce into the provincial election campaign before voters go to the polls on June 3. There is a noticeable gap between what the government says it is doing for the environment, and the reality, says Eric Legitt, Ontario's independent environment commissioner (appointed by the premier, the answer to the legislative assembly). Bureaucrats want to do their job properly, Legitt told

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Canada

## Rough waters on the right

By Brian Bergman

*We believe in the common sense of the common people*

—Preston Manning, in memorable speeches promoting the Reform Party of Canada

Christine Whitaker recalls the first time she heard Preston Manning speak. It was in 1990, at a small local meeting in Fort Qu'Appelle, Sask., where Manning was trying to drum up support for his fledgling Alberta-based party, *Fair Society*. Whitaker, a longtime Progressive Conservative who had become "thoroughly disgusted" with the government of Brian Mulroney, Manning's words struck an immediate chord. End deferential financing,

Embrace the equality of all provinces and all Canadians. Make politicians accountable to their constituents. "Everything that's still made sense to me," says the retired Saskatchewan high school teacher. "He invoked the way we think about these kinds of things."

Whether immediately because a Reformers and went on to serve three terms as a member of the party's influential executive council. But ever since Manning launched his crusade to unite Reformers and Conservatives under one banner, Whitaker has been one of his most ardent critics. "I fail to understand why he ever stepped down," she says. "It doesn't make political, philosophical or strategic sense and it's not what I would have expected from Preston."

Unhappily for Manning, these are many within his party—and his own caucus—who feel the same way. Some 70,000 Reformers are in the process of voting on whether or not the party should continue to pursue the so-called United Alternative movement. An early-may day rapidly approaches—the ballot must be cast by the end of May—and the grassroots supporters Manning has so carefully tended over the past decade are blossoming to trip him up. More than a dozen of his own MPs have gone out against the United Alternative, and a loose network of Reform riding executives and officials are working frantically to get out the *Never More*, though not all, of the resistance is coming from the party's western base.

Some grassroots Reformers are rebelling against Preston Manning's plan to unite his party with the Conservatives—putting the Reform leader's political future on the line.

*Manning sailing with wife Sandra; politicians stay close at the end of May*

when many longtime supporters fear that such cherished Reform policies and principles as the equality of provinces and democratic populism will be sacrificed to appease eastern Canadian voters. Myron Thompson, Reform MP for Alberta's Wild Rose riding, puts it succinctly: "If the new party is going to keep Reform policies and principles, why do we need it? If they are not going to do it, why would we want it?"

Manning has an equally blunt response to these questions. For the past two federal elections, Reform has been widely shut out in Quebec—the nation's breadbasket of electoral success and powerlessness. Manning says that for Reformers to assume that vocal—and to form a government—is a must that is inarguable as a regional party. "The way you achieve what we want is achieve it in 150-plus members of Parliament," Manning told *Montreal*. "At the end of the day there are a large number of people who want to see something done—whether it takes 100 to implement our policies."

In fact, Manning's determined drive towards a United Alternative began immediately after the 1997 federal election. To his supporters, the results were a resounding success for Reform. The party consolidated its regional base, winning 66 of the 86 seats in the four western provinces—though none east of Manitoba—and became the official Opposition in Parliament. Manning quickly concluded that if he ever hopes to overthrow 34 *Sons of Dime*, Reformers must make a concerted effort to reach out to like-minded individuals from the very party they had helped drive to the brink of destruction. Manning's *Never More* drew a hostile response from the op-

ponents of the federal Conservative party—including its untested leader, Joe Clark—but he earned a kinder reception from many influential provincial Tories. The most notable sympathizer, Alberta Premier Ralph Klein, who gave a keynote address to the United Alternative inaugural convention in Ottawa in February.

In the end, though, the Ottawa meeting—which brought together 1,400 delegates, 60 per cent of whom were Reformers—gave lukewarm support to Manning's preferred option, with only 34 per cent voting in favour of forming a new party. And there were already strong signs of discontent among hard-core Reformers. "I'm a Reformer and I'll die a Reformer," MP Thompson told a reporter as he watched the convention bubble following the vote. "This wasn't where I'm from."

Thompson's criticism proved prescient. In recent weeks, a group of Edmonton-area Reform activists have launched what they call *GUARD*—*Guaranteeing United Against Reform's Demise*. By phone, by fax, through speaking engagements and their own Web site, they are urging ordinary Reformers to stop Manning's initiative in its tracks. Pressure from *GUARD* and others at the rail-and-fax helped prod 14 Reform MPs into openly opposing their leader. "Reformers do not want to vote on this blindly," says Ron Thompson, a past president of the Edmonton-Southsask riding association and one of the founders of *GUARD*. "With us, jobs are not a game, but a passion. And we don't want the dream to die."

The poisoned thorn to Reform's core principles is not the only objection made by the United Alternative's foes. They worry that if the present process goes for another year or more, the Liberals will also take advantage of it by calling a snap election (if this month's vote is

positive, a series of talk tests will be asked, followed by a second referendum on forming a new party, most likely in the first half of the year 2000). They also suspect Manning's argument that the only way Reform can form a government is to merge into a new political entity. "That's just negative thinking," says J. Allen Spence, a retired Calgary insurance salesman and longtime Reformer. "The side begins with the customer says 'no.' You are not beaten until you give up."

Manning, of course, will have plenty of supporters among the grassroots. Kelowna riding president Don Irwin oversees a meeting of 325 B.C. Reformers last month at which Manning spoke strongly in favour of the United Alternative. "I think most people left saying, 'If this show Preston and others in leadership feel we need to go, then we support that,'" says Irwin. The political betting as of last week was that the Reform leader will prevail in the referendum—though perhaps by a much thinner margin than he would like. But according to some analysts, even if he wins, he loses. University of Lethbridge political scientist Harold Jensen points out that if the United Alternative comes into being, there could be direct right of centre parties vying for votes, with some die-hard Reformers likely to run under their own banner. On the other hand, if the U.A. is voted down, it will be seen by many as a clear repudiation of Manning's leadership. "He's dismissed if he does, damned if he doesn't," says Jensen. "It's his last ride away."

Manning points out that the party weakened severely by losing internal elections in the past before the threat of falling federal candidates over the Manitoba lands and against competing provincial elections. "Every time there are these studies that it's going to blow apart," he says. "But each time we have changed strategies, rather than weaken." What the Reform leader leaves unmentioned is that, in each instance, the party has eventually shifted around as preferred options. For that to happen again, Manning can only hope he continues to have a firm grip on what "the common people" consider sensible. ■

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## Bruce Wallace

# Divided they stand

Another twist of criticism from the green lobby touched down on Environment

Minister Christine Stewart last week. Environmentalists and sympathetically green Liberal MPs were furious with the cabinet's last-minute rethink of some environmental protection in its new environmental protection bill, which will go to the House of Commons for what will be a close-fisted vote within weeks. The environmental groups accused Stewart of allowing colleagues like Ralph Goodale (natural resources), Lyle Vachek (agriculture) and John Manley (industry) to treat her like so much cheap fibre as they walked over her bill's environmental measures during debate in the cabinet's powerful economy committee. The mild-mannered, consensus-seeking Stewart never scored a chance. The pro-business ministers back some of the clauses that were upsetting other environmentalists and the cabinet's decision.

But the government's pose, showing on environmental issues goes beyond a weak minister, or even its own uncertainty about just how environmentally friendly it wants to be. Nearly halfway through their mandate, the Liberals are increasingly divided as a range of issues, from where to protect Canadian culture (if at all) to where to cut taxes, the divisions will hardly fracture the party. They simply threaten to turn an already cautious government into an armless one.

The Liberal party has always been a broad church, accommodating 16 different programs on the economic and social reforming agenda on the other. This is partly why Prime Minister Jean Chrétien has enjoyed such quiet discipline on his caucus, threatening to expel any MP who breaks rank. (Just last month, his chief of staff, John Bellamy, wrote a new MP with a neo-Nazi attitude of the high cabinet. Chrétien has for now played it safe.)

But political circumstances are aggravating the Liberal's internal divisions. The slipping of the deficit under the third union of

minions that inspired MPs through the first Chrétien mandate. Most Liberals are now alienated with the issue of post-Chrétien leadership, and are seeking out positions for any cause to cause (there is very much a sense in Manley's attempt to outflank Finance Minister Paul Martin on the right). Perhaps most significant, the weakness of the opposition parties gives the Liberals no urgent need to band together. The Bloc Québécois opened its Question Period one day last week with a success about interventionist but denigration. Liberals stare across the aisle and feel no loss.

The result is a rise in the number of internal Liberal divisions. In protecting Canadian migration from foreign competition, the cabinet and the party gave a vote to what was called "Washington, the free market and the cultural nationalists". Should some examples be created to each other's person benefits? Who should get a tax break over poor lower-paid workers, or those already high-paying professionals whose rights from Canada's lower-tax haven (like would be the United States), in part, supposedly responsible for our falling productivity rate?

But no issue showed the government's paralysis more than last week's dodge over calls to let the Divorce Act provisions on child custody and access. A parliamentary committee spent ages taking testimony from parents, finally recommending what they children's best good relationships with both parents after divorce. But the government is still in a state of indecision. Liberal MPs supporting the rights of fathers, against those more closely aligned with women's groups, Justice Minister Anne McLellan came out squarely in favour of more conservatism. It will take three years, the bill, which would also push the issue conservatively (and cynically) beyond the next election. If the government believes change is not needed, it should have the courage to say so. Otherwise, allowing parents and children to pay the price for Liberal incoherence is nothing short of shameful.

## Munro gets \$1.4 million

Former Liberal cabinet minister John Munro secured a nearly \$1.4-million payout from the federal government. The settlement was from a lawsuit charged last by the RCMP against Munro in 1988, relating to when he was taken into custody in the 1980s and alleged that federal money was funneled through a money laundering into Munro's unsuccessful 1984 Liberal leadership campaign. The charges were dropped in 1991.

## Headed to adult court

Seventeen-year-old Kelly Ellard has been bid in the Supreme Court of Canada to be tried as a young offender in the 1997 conviction and drawing of Victim's name from the 1997 trial. She is now in the custody of the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services. She is now in the custody of the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services. She is now in the custody of the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services.

## Over the wall

Two guards were suspended and three others were given warnings for being caught around the clock after a 1998 Canadian film, *Black and White*, was shown in Kingston since 1998. As well as that, some were previously that it might be too early to release. The guards were suspended for not reporting that there was a break in the wall. The film was shown in Kingston since 1998. As well as that, some were previously that it might be too early to release.

## Bubbles Galore

Others were shown over television that *Black and White* is a 1998 Canadian film, but some showed by 1998. As well as that, some were previously that it might be too early to release. The guards were suspended for not reporting that there was a break in the wall. The film was shown in Kingston since 1998. As well as that, some were previously that it might be too early to release.

## Campaign bust

The Ontario Provincial Police are probing allegations that Conservative supporters encouraged high school students to stop school to attend a rally and allowed them to smoke and drink illegally on the way to the rally. The Ontario Provincial Police are probing allegations that Conservative supporters encouraged high school students to stop school to attend a rally and allowed them to smoke and drink illegally on the way to the rally.

## Canada Notes



## A royal carriage ride in the nation's capital

King Abdullah of Jordan and his wife, Queen Rania, arrived in Ottawa for a two-day visit aimed at securing continued Canadian support for his country. Abdullah, whose father, King Hussein, died in February, met with Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, whose father, John Diefenbaker, is buried in the same cemetery. Chrétien indicated he will meet another's concerns about its foreign debt with other groups of seven leaders.

## Naval battles on the West Coast

### Relations between Ottawa and the British Columbia government took a turn for the worse over the Nanos Bay

experts testing range off Vancouver Island. The Canadian and U.S. navy have used Nanos Bay since 1965 for the current 10-year lease from British Columbia is scheduled to run out on Sept. 4. And in a letter dated in November, the lease for the first time back down. Ottawa said it would accept the change. British Columbia's Premier Glen Clark has said the issue to the problem faced by his province in the War Canis factory. In 1997, he threatened to cancel the lease because of U.S. overfishing. Now, the province is claiming that Ottawa has abandoned the B.C. factory—and is building off from an agreement in principle not to let U.S. warships use the range. Clark acknowledged last week that there had been some headway in negotiations. Ottawa's offer to pay \$4 million a year for the use of Nanos Bay—the current price is \$1 annually—was "significant". But although he would not discuss his demands, he added: "This is not about money for the provincial government. This is about help for fisheries and conservation and about conservation."

## Mayor Lastman's deadly threat

Toronto Mayor Mel Lastman was forced to apologize after threatening to kill CBC TV reporter Adam Vaughan. Vaughan was upset over published reports that his wife, Melba, had been apprehended, but not charged, in a shoplifting incident and believed Vaughan circled the story. Vaughan, who has had more relations with the mayor, denied the allegation. Vaughan apologized to Vaughan in a letter, and last week to city residents before leaving with his wife on a Florida vacation.

The house sits in the green hills above Skopje, nestled discreetly among the vineyards as the northern outskirts of the Macedonian capital. It is a large, Mediterranean-style villa, surrounded for occupancy according to visitors on the site, by NATO. When the new tenants move in next week, however, they will be police investigators in plain clothes, all attached to the UN war crimes tribunal in The Hague. And if the tribunal's chief prosecutor, Canada's Louise Arbour, has her way, what those investigators uncover in the house in the hills could well be the beginning of the trail that eventually leads to an unprecedented indictment of Slobodan Milosevic for war crimes. "One aim," vowed Arbour last week, "is to follow the chain of evidence as high up the command-and-control structure as we can possibly go—and that includes the office of the Yugoslav president."

The Canadian justice delivered her pledge at the end of a week-long tour of the Balkans—three days in Bosnia and four more in Macedonia—while rumors swirled about her imminent departure from the tribunal to accept an appointment to Canada's Supreme Court. During her travels, Arbour was dogged by questions about her future, which may have been responsible for the concerning wrangle she left behind. In her role as chief prosecutor, there was a new steel in her prosecution, virtually devoid of the measured discretion that has been her trademark for the past 2½ years. She returned on words about NATO forces in Bosnia, describing it as "unconscionable" that the alliance's troops have yet to arrest leading Bosnian Serbs accused of perpetrating atrocities in the former

Yugoslav republic, in particular former Bosnian Serb president Radovan Karadzic and his military chief, Gen. Ratko Mladic. Moreover, she finally confirmed what has been an open secret for some time in many Western capitals: Under Arbour's direction, the tribunal wants dismantled to create a potentially fire-breathing legal precedent by making Milosevic the first sitting chief of state in modern history to be indicted for war crimes. It is as if the tribunal intends to pursue even at the risk of complicating Kosovo peace negotiations. "There is absolutely no compromise," Arbour declared last week, "between our quest for justice and any deals that may be worked out with the current Yugoslav leadership."

But if a more outgoing chief prosecutor emerged last week, Arbour remained far less forthcoming about her own plans. The Quebec-born Ontario Appeals Court judge continued to avoid direct answers to questions about whether she is preparing to leave the tribunal before her four-year term expires at the end of next year. In late April, Prime Minister Jean Chrétien confirmed widespread reports that Arbour was one of a number of possible candidates in line to replace Justice Peter Cory, who retires from the bench at the end of May. Last week, Chrétien went further, saying, Arbour's current job was very demanding and "I've been informed that she finds it extremely difficult to carry on this way—she has a family and so on. So she might be tempted to come back at her own."

When queried by *Maclean's* in Macedonia about her intentions, Arbour's reply was Delphic: "I assumed you that I am still a member of the Canadian judiciary currently on leave with the United Nations," she said. "I understand there is a selec-



## The UN war crimes prosecutor weighs a return to Canada for a seat on the Supreme Court

tion process now under way for an appointment to the Canadian Supreme Court. That process is not being conducted in the media as I expect that I am not in a position to answer your question." But Arbour's Australian, second-in-command, deputy prosecutor Graham Blewett, said that, as of last week, Arbour had not been offered Cory's Ontario slot on the Supreme Court, nor had she yet made up her mind what she would do if the offer were made. Many court-watchers expect an Ottawa announcement to come some time in the near future.

This is clearly a difficult moment for Arbour, coming as it does just as the hunt for Biljana Plavcic, the tribunal's first female prosecutor, is under way. Asides at the tribunal's headquarters in The Hague report, on one privately confided, that she is "torn between the prospect of a really big job at home or staying on here, where the next two years are likely to be really interesting, maybe even offering the chance to prosecute Milosevic."

At the same time, deputy Blewett dismissed concerns voiced by U.S. officials and various non-governmental human rights

organizations about the damage her departure would inflict on the tribunal. "She will certainly be missed if she decides to go," he admitted, "but the tribunal's work will continue. We're a mature organization. We've been in business now for six years. All of our systems are up and running and they will continue to do so no matter who is in charge."

In Arbour's absence, Blewett himself is the most likely candidate for the job, particularly if, as seems likely, the UN Security Council decides over the choice of a new chief prosecutor. A now 51-year-old, he has been a prosecutor for his entire career—21 years in Sydney, another four with the Australian National Crime Authority and four more prosecuting Nazi war criminals in his native land. He has been deputy prosecutor in The Hague since the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia was established by the Security Council in May 1993 (Bosnians 1994 blood-bath was later added to its mandate). More to the point, Blewett claims Arbour's determination to move as high up the

# The trials of Louise Arbour

By Barry Carr in Skopje

## Under Armour, the tribunal is gathering evidence to indict Slobodan Milosevic



chain of command as possible in pursuing those responsible for the atrocities unfolding in and around Kosovo.

"From a legal point of view, we now have a good chance as we've had to pin the blame for what is happening on Milosevic," Blewett argued while running a bar in the Macedonia capital last week. "In Bosnia, Milosevic could evade ultimate responsibility because he was then president of Serbia. In the early going in Kosovo, he could claim some kind of immunity because by then he had become president of Yugoslavia and Kosovo was a Serbian problem. But he no longer has any of those excuses now because the Yugoslav armed forces are involved and he is commander-in-chief of those forces."

Like Arbour, Blewett is convinced that hard evidence exists to build an airtight courtroom case against Milosevic. The problem the evidence is now in the hands of various Western intelligence agencies, and it is precisely the kind of documented proof that most intelligence organizations are loath to disclose for fear of compromising methods, sources, even old-fashioned spies on the ground. While neither Blewett nor Arbour will detail the evidence they are uncovering, it is believed to include photographs, imagery from satellites and surveillance aircraft as well as electronic intercepts and other forms of secretly recorded conversations between commanders in the field and ranking generals and political leaders, establish-

ing beyond doubt what orders were dispatched to whom and when. "We're sure the proof is there," said Blewett, "but we don't yet have access to it."

In pursuit of that evidence, Arbour and Blewett have been travelling almost incessantly for the past three weeks. Before journeying to the Balkans last week, the two visited Washington, London, Paris, Bonn and Brussels. In part, Arbour used the tour to discuss her possible resignation with key officials, including U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. But at each stop, she and Blewett also lobbied for access to the intelligence. The British, German and French governments have been most forthcoming. But authorities in the United States, where the real pressure truly exists, have been less co-operative, motivated no doubt by the belief that any negotiated end to the Kosovo conflict might have to involve a deal with Milosevic, perhaps even guarantees of immunity for the Yugoslav president and his immediate entourage. Yet as Arbour and Blewett canvass around the world, only their UN boss can put such a deal into effect. "Our mandate comes from the Security Council," said Blewett. "And that is the only body empowered to change our mandate."

Even NATO, hence, in theory, are not beyond the tribunal's reach. Last week in Macedonia, Arbour coaxed that the tribunal's powers include the ability to investigate



Following a suspected mass grave in Bosnia, calls for NATO to arrest suspect Serbs

complaints about war crimes committed by any participant in the Yugoslav conflict. She quickly added, however, that the tribunal was not likely to act unless the complainers "were credible and contained the real possibility of an indictment." In NATO's case, that is a far-fetched assumption. The tribunal can launch prosecutions under four basic sets of offences—violations of the laws or customs of war, grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions, genocide, and crimes against humanity. Given NATO's rigid rules of engagement in the current conflict, legal action seems a distant possibility. Last week, Yugoslavia used another venue in The Hague to accuse 10 NATO warplanes, including Canada's, of genocide, asking the International Court of Justice to order a halt to NATO's bombing campaign. The 10 defendants challenged the world court's jurisdiction.

For Arbour's tribunal, these may be difficulties giving access to top-level intelligence, but there have been no problems gathering information at the other end of the scale. The tribunal's own resources have, in fact, been taxed to the limit uncovering and verifying eyewitness accounts of war crimes. Virtually all of the 700,000 refugees who have flooded across the province's borders into Albania and Macedonia have been handed one-page questionnaires from the tribunal asking firsthand accounts of possible war crimes—mass deportations, executions, rapes and other atrocities. "Apprenticeship use in every 10 has responded," noted Paul Rieley, the tribunal's Dutch-based information officer.

The painstaking task of digging further into those allegations is now under way. It is conducted by the tribunal's staff of 70 investigators, aided by some 350 monitors from the Organization of Co-operation and Security in Europe. So far,

investigation has exposed police officers, a few militia but most on leaves from public offices around the globe. The tribunal refuses to identify any of them. "They have to remain anonymous to do their job properly," argued Blewett. The specific cases they are investigating are also confidential—in order, said Blewett, "to prevent perpetrators from going back to destroy whatever forensic evidence may exist at crime scenes."

There are hopes a probe is investigating. It is a report made last week by the U.S. State Department's even more strongly accused Ertugrul. "Ertugrul's history of violence in Kosovo," it is a grim catalogue of atrocities gathered mostly from interviews with ethnic Albanian refugees. They report mass executions of at least 4,000 Kosovo men in 70 towns and villages. They also tell of the systematic rape of Kosovo women in the cities of Djakovica and Pristina, where the local military commander reportedly used a corner of soldiers' tents to allow all of his troops evenings of flirtatious sex with young Albanian women questioned at Puck Hotel Karaguje. More than 300 Kosovo villages have been burned, many of them to the ground, the state department's report claims. And it alleges that Yugoslav accounts tend to support reconnaissance photographs showing as many as seven mass graves, including two large ones in Pristina and Istok. "Only when the fighting has ended," declared Albright as she released the report, "will we know the full extent of the evil this has been inflicting."

Despite the scale of atrocities described, the U.S. report does not dispute the fact that few officers have been made to independently verify the refugees' accounts. But these plainclothes investigations in their house on the hill may well accomplish the task. If they do, the war crimes tribunal is ready to act, with or without the leadership of Louise Arbour. ■

## A woman of independent mind

Rarely has one contender left all others so far behind in the handsomely deep inevitably provides an opportunity to the Supreme Court of Canada. "There is a kind of consensus in the legal community that Louise Arbour is an ideal candidate, so, if not elected, then clearly the leading candidate," says Patrick Monahan, a professor at York University. Opposite Hill Law School in Toronto, but if Arbour's front-runner status is undisputed, there remain plenty of voters for outsiders about what she would play on the top court—at a time when debate rages over how far Supreme Court judges should go in redefining the law on native issues from gay rights to native land claims.

Arbour's legal track record frus-

trated attempts at pigeonholing. As an Ontario Court of Appeal judge, she was prone from groups that favour court-backed social reforms when she ordered an Ontario school board in 1995 to educate a disabled child in a regular classroom. But she is also renowned by some feminists for having argued successfully, as counsel for the Canadian Civil Liberties Association in a 1987 case on the so-called rape shield law, that defence lawyers should sometimes be allowed to question a victim of an alleged sexual assault about her sexual past. "She brings an independence of mind, a willingness not to adopt a stance because it is seen as the correct position, but to look at issues on their merits," Monahan says.

That sort of balanced approach

could be sorely needed on the Supreme Court. If appointed, Arbour would replace retiring Justice Peter Cory, who played a key role in bridging the court's activist and more moderate camps. While Arbour is more charismatic than the amiable low-key Cory, her reputation for shrewd and not could help her play a similar conciliatory role. A 52-year-old member of three separate from her husband, Arbour has strong credentials: educated at the University of Montreal, a former professor at Osgoode, appointed to the Ontario Supreme Court in 1987 and the appeal court in 1994, succeeded to the UN war crimes tribunal in 1996. Now, she may be about to trade a stint of global celebrity at The Hague for the often contentious life of one of Canada's most powerful jurists.

John Golden is Ottawa



# Trouble on two fronts

Outrage in China and political chaos in Russia threaten Kosovo peace hopes

**How angry** were the Chinese that what they contemptuously labeled "U.S. and NATO" recently bombed their country's embassy in Belgrade? So angry, it turned out last week, that some topped eating American fast food—at least temporarily. McDonald's, Pizza Hut and Dairy Queen outlets in Beijing were mostly empty, and a poster displayed near Beijing University conveyed the fury of an outraged people: "Give up the concept of American-style fast food and cultural output—Coca-Cola, Pepsi, McDonald's, KFC."

However oddly it was expressed, Chinese anger at the United States for killing three Chinese journalists during its bungled bombing of the embassy was genuine enough. Chinese government may have encouraged and channeled the emotional protest through its three days outside the U.S. Embassy in Beijing. But it did not manufacture the feelings behind them. Suddenly, the already-muddled relations between China and the United States were at their lowest ebb since they resumed official contact in 1979. And just as suddenly, China was dragged into a crisis it had been content to observe from the sidelines—NATO's war against Serbia. It promptly used NATO's embarrassment to demand that the alliance stop its bombing campaign before the UN Security Council, where it holds a veto, gives its blessing to any peace plan for Kosovo.

Even worse for the West, China and Russia lined up in a tentative new alliance once Kosovo. Even since the early 1970s, when Richard Nixon initiated his dramatic opening to China, the United States has made playing Beijing off against Moscow a constant part of its foreign policy. By dropping their bombs on China's embassy in Belgrade, because the Pentagon loudly explained, NATO targeted war using outdated maps, Washington put all at risk in jeopardy. Russia's Kosovo peace strategy, Viktor Chertomyshev, insistently insisted to Beijing and endorsed the Chinese position. NATO has ruled out a bombing pause, but it was again, on the defensive at week's end after dozens of ethnic Albanians died in the bombing of what NATO and the U.S. was military target in Kosovo.

The alliance's diplomatic war was complicated by Russia internal rivalry. Western leaders had been counting heavily

on Moscow to find a way out of Kosovo. In Washington, it has been dubbed the "two magpies" theory—NATO pulls the Russians closer to its position, then hopes the Russians can pull Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic closer to its cause. But Russian President Boris Yeltsin's surprise decision last week to fire his latest prime minister, Yegor Gerasimov, and his major government shake that strategy into question. Yeltsin followed up by threatening to end all talks with NATO over Kosovo if the alliance continues to ignore Moscow's suggestions.

Yeltsin's domestic motives baffled many observers, given that he was fighting what turned out to be an unsuccessful attempt to impeach him in the Russian Duma, or parliament. President's growing popularity, long a fitting offering for the aging president, seemed a key element. Yeltsin named former television minister Sergey Stepashin, 47, a lobbyist with strong roots in the security services, as the new prime minister—strongly suggesting possible confirmation with the Duma over his confirmation.

For despite Russian political chaos, on diplomatic matters, neither remained silent. Chertomyshev answered directly to Yeltsin and so can continue his peace efforts despite President's dismissal. Moreover, it is easy to read too much into the new Moscow-Beijing pact. Both countries are uneasy at being labeled as puppets by NATO. And both share a dislike for the emboldened Western doctrine that allows intervention in countries that violate human rights too grievously, especially since Russia's accession to an alliance (Russia has Chechnya and other native uprisings; China has Tibet and Taiwan). But to most experts, the good ideological ideological alliance has a greater interest in good relations with the United States than in carrying up to each other again. "There's just too much to lose and too little to gain for both of them," notes Robert Samuels, who arrived as a White House adviser on East Asia from 1994 to 1998. Nevertheless, a week after the embassy deaths, Chinese President Jiang Zemin finally accepted a phone call from U.S. President Bill Clinton offering personal condolences for the deaths of the three Chinese. Peace in Kosovo, however, looked more elusive than ever.

Andrew Phillips in Washington



Stepashin with Yeltsin in early May, a morning to NATO

## Belfast peace worries

British Prime Minister Tony Blair on June 30 at the "historic" deadline for agreement among Northern Ireland's feuding political parties on setting up a new government. Two deadlines in March and April were missed. Pro-British unionists have insisted that the Irish Republican Army must stop its claims before elected representatives from its political wing, Sinn Féin, can join the body. Sinn Féin leader Gerry Adams insists that the issue cannot be lifted.

## Lordly compromise

Is there more that could provide the way for reform of the British House of Lords, a deal was struck that will allow 92 of the upper chamber's 599 hereditary lords to remain while its future is decided. Elected by the rising Labour Party to oversee the House of Lords have been staunchly opposed by the Conservatives who dominate it. The compromise—that which parties will settle the 92 who stay on—was designed to buy and the government would a full reform plan. The 1,077-member body also includes clerics and peers appointed for life.

## Crosses banned

Poland passed a law allowing the government to remove controversial crosses near the Namkha chapel of Auschwitz. Poland's Roman Catholic Church has been accused of erecting the crosses, but few regard them as a desecration of the tragic memory of European Jewry.

## Beef war looms

The European Union moved a step closer to a trade war with the United States and Canada by refusing to rescind a ban on hormone-treated beef by May 13, a deadline set by the World Trade Organization. The EU claims the hormone-treated steers worth \$100 million on American importers. From chemicals in beef exports, Canada will seek \$70 million.

## Nanny's parents nabbed

The parents of Louise Woodward, the British nanny convicted of manslaughter last year in the death of a child she was caring for in Massachusetts, were charged with defrauding a trust fund set up to help pay for her defense. The charges against Sue and Gary Woodward involve a \$21,000 bill submitted for accommodations.



## The end of five frightening hours for Jessy

Rescue workers pulled 17-month-old Jessy Kross out of a well in Mahone, Kan., where he spent five hours trapped just above the waterline five meters down. While firefighters Tim Demmer shined through a narrow tunnel specially dug to reach the toddler, who fell into the unattended well outside his parents' home in a new subdivision. Although unharmed, Jessy said, he was not seriously hurt.

## Guns trigger a Senate flip-flop

Stunned by an uproar over their refusal to acquire mandatory background checks for weapons sales in gun shows, Republican leaders in the U.S. Senate reversed course a day later and pushed through a provision they claimed would screen all buyers. The flip-flop came less than a month after the massacre at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colo., in which 12 students and a teacher were killed by two students who committed suicide at the scene. After the killings, polls

showed that a rising percentage of Americans favored tougher gun laws. Buyer background checks, however, were required only for purchases from licensed gun dealers, not from individuals at gun shows. President Bill Clinton, clearly sensing that public opinion was behind him, cleared the Republican counter-proposal on gun shows was still full of "high-velocity loopholes."

Even so, pro-gun legislators were feeling the heat on the issue. The Senate passed two other measures it had disavowed in the past, banning predators from possessing semiautomatic weapons and outlawing the import of high-capacity ammunition clips.

## Spies.com: unmasked on the Web

The British government has accused an cyberintelligence spy of endangering the lives of scores of Soviet intelligence Service agents by publishing their names on the Internet. The U.S.-based Web site, which named more than 100 alleged officers, was shut down, but the list resurfaced on other sites. Foreign Secretary Robert Cook said the SIS had been badly damaged and its agents in non-NATO countries could be withdrawn. Cook blamed former agent Richard Tordella for putting out the list as an act of revenge against the organization that fired him four years ago.

# The high-flying fugitive

Is Rakesh Saxena a brilliant con man, or the fall guy for a corrupt banking system?

By Vishan Smith in Vancouver

Even on a dreary May afternoon in Vancouver, the view of Granville Island and the yachts around it is delightful. But Rakesh Saxena is not interested. He has just finished a morning of stock trading, international business deals and his unrepentant Rothmans cigarette. The beige blinds are down, the big-screen television is tuned to a business channel, and files, books and regulatory texts surround him as he discusses his life as a wanted man. Saxena has spent most of the past three years fighting allegations that he conspired a fraud so heart-breaking that it helped topple the Thai government and trigger Asian economic setbacks, yet his tone is as easy and untroubled as if he were clearing the rain.

Saxena's casual manner is not the only incongruous element in this picture of international intrigue and high finance. The strict visiting rules, the surveillance cameras in the hall, the last-of-its-kind in the divorce and the over-protective security guard seems out of place in what is otherwise a cluttered, three-bedroom suite in a luxury condominium complex. Known to Saxena cronies as "the bunker," the headquarters of his far-reaching business empire, the condo now also doubles as a jail cell for the 46-year-old financier. The Kingdom of Thailand has accused him and others of conspiring an \$88-million bank fraud in that country, and Thai officials have demanded that he be sent



back to face charges. A hearing under Canada's Extradition Act, which began in June, 1997, and is expected to wind up next month, will determine whether there is enough evidence to commit Saxena to jail in Bangkok.

Saxena (pronounced rah-SAY-na) does not wish to go, insisting he has committed no crime, will not get a fair trial, and may be in danger if he returns to a country where, he says, bribery and corruption are rampant operating procedures. He has insisted in court that he delivered bribes to high-ranking Thai officials, but says the people ultimately responsible for the fraud were former colleagues, police and politicians. Much of the evidence presented against him in court, including testimony that he ordered death threats against former associates and their families, is simply "everything," he says.

Despite a recent legal setback in which Judge Frank MacKillop of the B.C. Supreme Court refused to allow Saxena's lawyers to admit certain documents into evidence, Saxena says he will oppose his extradition all the way to the Supreme Court of



Saxena's luxury condominium building in Vancouver; the wanted man at work (left). "I don't draw any more line at all."

Canada, if necessary. Given the legal resources available to him, should the judge find in Thailand's favour—Saxena can also clear his case to the B.C. Court of Appeal and the federal justice minister—he could well remain in Canada for years to continue the fight. Co-counsel David Scahler, who is acting for Saxena on behalf of the Thai government, acknowledges there have been delays, but says "we are all very keen to move this as fast as we can."

Saxena's story is both fascinating in its scope and bewildering in its financial complexity. It also sheds light on how those with an appetite for risk can reap huge profits from social instability and lax regulations in the world's emerging markets. The kind of "fourth-world arbitrage" he does, Saxena submits, is "an art at the best of times, and that doesn't mean it's illegal." He adds "I don't draw any more line at all. My moral line is, as long as there is a deal and you honour the deal."

And now here he is in Vancouver, keeping watch on investments in Sierra Leone, eastern Europe and Russia. During a typical day, he will rise at 2 a.m. to catch the opening of the major European markets and work until about 2 p.m., trading calls with business associates around the world. The rest of the day is devoted to seeing clients, practicing law, working out on his SmithMaster or trading—his current fix

cations of choice by Somerset Maugham—until he retires by 8 p.m. Visitors bring him food and cigarettes, and a two-weekly visit by a housekeeper keeps the place tidy. A former doctor of expensive restaurants is worldwide, he now just fires himself "hard-boiled and cold cuts."

When his mother, a second senior official in the Commonwealth Secretariat in London, comes to visit, he doesn't cook for her, orders "Shut an international lawyer," says Saxena. "He can't cook anything." Rather than wear his face in jail—he has spent only five months in a detention centre since his arrest in 1996—Saxena negotiated a bail agreement under which he posted \$2 million in securities to live and work as his own boss. In addition, he agreed to hire a private security agency to keep him under 24-hour surveillance—at a cost, he says, of \$30,000 a month. The guards allow him to leave the condo only for court appearances and meetings with lawyers. Their assignment is not to protect Saxena from his enemies but to ensure that he doesn't flee. In February, 1998, he was found to have violated an earlier set of bail conditions by arranging the flight of a passport, a charge he continues to deny.

Although Saxena professes not to be overly perturbed by his circumstances, he is attempting to have the bail terms adjusted so he can socialize, work on his 22-hole golf game

## Saxena's neighbours are outraged by his bail arrangements

and use his bar room for sporting events at General Motors Place. A prodigious drinker who routinely downed litres of beer and half-bottles of Scotch daily, Saxena says heavy drinking is simply a trader's way to unwind after the markets close. He had countless suppers, however, that no alcohol or drugs are permitted in his home.

The man referred to in the extradition documents simply as "the fugitive" is involved in at least eight legal battles in British Columbia alone, including a recently launched civil action in which he accuses Thai officials of conspiring to falsely accuse him of embezzling the \$88 million. The action would compel the officials to testify under oath in Canada—after which, Saxena hopes, the courts will agree to enforce his bank accounts in Switzerland, Ireland and the Isle of Man.

If it were up to Saxena's neighbours, however, he would be hauled off to Thailand immediately. One woman who lives in the condominium development says that she and some other residents are afraid of "such a powerful man." Neither she nor any of Saxena's former associates would agree to be quoted by name, but there is widespread outrage at the fact that would have enabled Saxena to secure such a comfortable bail arrangement. His neighbours also worry about the impact his pres-



Thai protesters at the height of the country's financial crisis, a dramatic effort

ence will have on property values. Even in a depressed Vancouver housing market, Saxena's condo is worth at least \$700,000.

But it is Judge Macleod, not the neighbours, who will preside over Saxena's fate, in a decision expected in early September. Although Thai officials have accused Saxena and several associates of embezzling as much as \$2.2 billion in a series of transactions over several years, the extradition case hinges on one charge in particular: an alleged fraud involving an \$88-million loan from a now-bankrupt Thai commercial bank, the Bangkok Bank of Commerce. Thai prosecutors say the loan ultimately triggered a run on the bank's deposits and led to the institution's collapse.

Almost nothing about Saxena's case is simple, however—not even the circumstances of his arrest and July afternoon in 1996 while loitering with Thai police in the driveway of Windsor B.C., a mansion full of money by his side. There are two vastly different accounts of what happened that day. Saxena claims to

"50 years of building resources around the world...that's impressive."



## The bursting of a bubble

**Key events in the case against Rakesh Saxena, the Indian-born currency trader whom Thai officials accuse of triggering the Asian financial crisis:**

**1988:** While living in Bangkok, Saxena meets and befriends Kiatkarn Jitkarnkarn, president of Thailand's Bangkok Bank of Commerce. In time, Saxena becomes a consultant to the bank.

**1993-1994:** In a scheme allegedly masterminded by Saxena and his associates, the bank provides loans to prominent politicians and others to be used to acquire stakes in publicly traded

Thai companies. Some of the loans, prosecutors say, were to companies controlled by Saxena and bank officials.

**Early 1994:** Thai regulators estimate the bank's bad loans at \$2.1 billion, roughly 40 per cent of its assets. Subsequent audits reveal several dubious transactions.

**1996:** Bank officials, Saxena says, try to conceal the number of bad loans by

lending money to bank-owned shell companies so they can repay debts owed by other borrowers.

**February, 1996:** Thailand's central bank governors order Kiatkarn not to renew Saxena's consulting contract.

**May, 1996:** Alarmed by news reports of the bank's deteriorating condition, depositors withdrew hundreds of millions of dollars from their accounts. The collapse fuels allegations of widespread corruption and mismanagement in Thailand's economy.

**May 23, 1996:** Saxena enters Canada on a visitor's visa.

**June, 1996:** Thailand accuses Saxena and several associates of embezzling as much as \$2.2 billion from the bank. Weeks later, RCMP officers arrest him in Windsor, B.C.

**July 2, 1997:** The Thai government gives in to speculative pressure on its currency by devaluing the baht. The move forces neighbouring countries to follow suit, triggering a financial crisis that spreads across Asia and to other emerging markets.

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have been in constant contact with Thai police regarding their investigation, even to the point of arranging transportation for them from the Vancouver airport to Whistler. He came to Canada not to evade Thai authorities, he says, but merely to oversee various business deals. RCMP officials, however, say they made the arrest at the request of the Thai police, who had embarked on a global manhunt for Sornsa.

Whatever the case, Thai prosecutors depict Sornsa as the man who knocked over the fine dominoes that became a global economic crisis. Sornsa, a short, portly man, insists

that he is simply a consultant and trader who plays the game the same way everybody else plays it in the world's emerging economies, where "if you do not bet, you do not survive." The idea that one person can be held responsible for an economic crisis is ludicrous, he says.

Sornsa has always been a numbers wizard, former associate manager. He was born near Delhi, India, in 1952, and moved with his mother to Britain while he was a young boy. She and Sornsa's father, a retired government bureaucrat, are divorced, and he has two siblings. Sornsa's co-wife still lives in Bangkok

with their three children, an eight-year-old girl and two six-year-old boys, who he has not seen since 1995. "You live with it, like you go on," he says of the separation from his children.

At 16, Sornsa returned to India to study mathematics and physics, but he switched to a lighter course load, majoring in English literature, so he would have more time to organize left-wing, anti-Vietnam War student protests. Philosophically, he says, he was—and still is—a Marxist.

But he was a Marxist with a knack for figures and a love of

high finance. After leaving to trade currencies, he worked in Hong Kong and then went to Thailand in 1985, establishing himself as a foreign exchange trader and trade consultant just as Thailand's economy was taking off. Four years later, he hooked up with a group of top officials at the Bangkok Bank of Commerce. During the early 1990s, Thai police allege, a number of bank insiders, including Sornsa and the bank's then-president, Krikkhar Jitthachandra, began floating dubious loans to Thai politicians and other influential people. According to the Thai government, loans were also made to companies controlled by Sornsa and bank officers. Sornsa said in court that the bank's lending practices were questionable by North American standards, but he insisted he was being used as a scapegoat for others. There is no doubt he has many powerful friends: In 1994, for instance, Sornsa introduced South-west dealer Abhisit Khathong to the bank. Soon after, the bank allegedly loaned Khathong and his group \$132 million. Sornsa now plays down the strength of the friendship, despite the fact that at a critical point he had been leaving late years. Khathong—in someone purporting to be here—took on a job he said was to help him and associate just a scholar affidavit and fitting it to the court from Paris.

Today, with Thailand and its neighbors still struggling to repair their battered economies, Sornsa's trading services are centered elsewhere. One favored area is Africa, where he consults a company with four diamond concessions in strife-torn Sierra Leone. According to evidence collected in a British parliamentary investigation, Sornsa helped fund a mercenary-led attempt to topple the government in defiance of a UN arms embargo. Sornsa disputes that, saying the mercenaries were simply helping to eradicate a job of his employees from an extremely coup.

Who to believe? Sornsa's case is full of enough charges and counter-charges to keep the Canadian justice system busy for years. As one senior watcher of the case puts it: "There are so many reasons of the truth here, even if only a quarter of it is in fact, it is all incredible." To others, perhaps for Sornsa, it's all just business. ■

## Digging out

Twenty-three months after Thailand crashed its economy by devaluing its currency, the country is only now emerging from the regional economic crisis. A Thai finance ministry official said last week that the long-term might not have to withdraw the remaining \$7.9 billion available under its \$24-billion rescue program from the International Monetary Fund. The government's most recent withdrawal was \$740 million in April.

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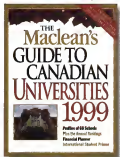
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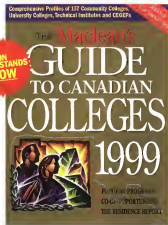
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## The Bre-X trail grows cold

**Investors determined** to go to the bottom of the Bre-X Minerals Ltd. gold cap scandal suffered a serious setback when the Royal Canadian Mounted Police shut down a two-year investigation into what has been dubbed the world's biggest stock fraud. The RCMP is concerned that criminal activity occurred—somebody must have stolen from the Calgary company's Indonesian drilling site—but the force said it lacks the information needed to press further charges in Canada. Then last winter—Bre-X's general manager Michael de Guzman and corporate founder David Walsh—say died, while others, including several former Bre-X directors, have refused to co-operate, primarily because they fear that the evidence they provide would be used against them in civil lawsuits.

The force's decision drew a barrage of criticism from the Bre-X shareholders and their lawyers. "The RCMP should turn to their smarter rivals," said Harvey Sorenberg, a Windsor, Ont., lawyer who represents hundreds of investors who lost money in the \$6-billion hoax. "The RCMP is doing nothing to us."

Nor did the Bre-X news ever lead to former shareholders. Earlier, the Ore-



Michael de Guzman with securities fraud

cario Securities Commission charged former chief geologist John Pridemore, a Dutch-born Canadian now living in the Cayman Islands, with eight securities violations, including an alleged \$84-million worth of insider trading. A hearing was set for June 15 in Toronto. Meanwhile, the Ontario Superior Court agreed to allow a shareholders' lawsuit against Bre-X and its officials to proceed as a class action. The court ordered from the lawsuit some investment dealers whose analysts had recommended their clients invest in the company. Justice Warren Winkler noted that many of the disgraced shareholders were not clients of the brokerage. Those who were, he said, should consider independently doing their own homework.

## Financial outlook

**Consumer confidence** appeared strong in March, with Canadian sales of trucks—including minivans, sport uti-

lity vehicles and pickups—climbing 10.1 per cent over last year. Demand for passenger cars rose a more modest one per cent, according to figures compiled by Statistics Canada.

The U.S. economy continues to steam forward, but that has cooled concern over inflation. The U.S. labor department reported that consumer prices jumped 0.7 per cent in April, the largest monthly rise in almost nine years. The news hurt stock markets on both sides of the border, even after the U.S. Federal Reserve Board could raise interest rates. Already, some Canadian banks have raised mortgage rates.

## Norled job cuts

Canada's largest telecommunications company, Norled Networks, says it will sell off close to 13 of its manufacturing plants around the world. The changes will result in the loss of about 1,800 jobs, including several hundred in Canada. The first step is to sell one factory by raising the roof of its manufacturing

## Drabinsky fights back

Reducted, Norled co-founder Garth Drabinsky denied he is an "abusive giant" and said he was not responsible for any financial mismanagement at the firm because he did not "own" money," an accounting. Drabinsky made statements in court documents defending himself from a \$325-million lawsuit brought by the company's now owner.

## Spar plummeted

A disgraced former of shareholders has seized control of Spar Aerospace Ltd., the Toronto-based company that built the federal Comander. The shareholders, the best kept secret of the poor performance of the company's shares, sold in one year's time 100 million shares and transferred the new board to liquidate most of Spar's cash reserves by distributing as much as \$125 million to shareholders. The remaining assets will likely be sold off.

## Going out on top

Robert Hughes, president in charge of the most successful treasury securities in U.S. history, will step down in July with the American company in an unprecedented expansion and the body dishes global currency opportunity on the road. The stock market climbed after the first session of Robert's departure, but investors quickly. President Bill Clinton announced he would nominate deputy treasury secretary Lawrence Summers as Robert's replacement.

## Wal-Mart says no

North America's largest retail chain, Wal-Mart, says its pharmacies will not sell a "morning-after" contraceptive pill that can be used up to 72 hours after intercourse. The Brownsville, Ark.-based company didn't say why it is refusing to stock the drug. Previously, family planning advocates criticized the move, saying some women, particularly in rural areas where Wal-Mart has little competition, would encounter greater difficulty finding the drug. Plans for a new company available in Canada.

## The Nation's Business



Peter C. Newman

# Magazines define the country

At a time when the future of Canadian magazines still seems up in the air, with Heritage Minister Sheila Copps having difficulty persuading

Widespread that it's a defining issue for this country, I want to take a moment to write about *Maclean's*. Perhaps it's time to remind ourselves what magazines in general and this one in particular mean to the nation at large.

What has changed most of all during the four decades I've been involved with *Maclean's* is how Canadians have perceived their homeland. We have gained the self-confidence of moving into the 21st century as citizens of one of the world's most sophisticated and industrially mature countries, the best place to live in the universe, according to the UN surveys.

At *Maclean's*'s self-appointed "Weekly Newsmagazine," *Maclean's* has played a not inconsiderable part in the process of achieving the country's image of itself. From its previous birth as a business digest with 5,000 subscribers in 1965, as an annual almanac as a newsweekly with a readership of two million, it has documented Canada's never ending struggle for citizenship. These pages have carefully recorded the turmoil of small incidents and large events that marked the country's passage through a difficult, occasionally confusing and often frustrating time. At its best, *Maclean's* has been a mirror in which Canadians glimpsed each other and recognized themselves. It is a magazine woven into the fabric and momentum of this country—providing a loose but valid definition of who we are and why we are here.

*Maclean's* has always managed to sit up special excitement. Unlike newspapers, which are bound by their mandate to deal with immediate events, or books, in which writers allow readers as an audience of one, magazines over their access to a different audience the lively debates of the House of Commons and the village fairs of medieval Europe. Keith Dewar caught that truth when, as chairman of the 1989 Special Senate Committee on Mass Media, he concluded that "magazines add a journalistic dimension which no other media can provide—depth and wholeness and texture.... They could potentially be as important as newspapers, articles, national broadcasting networks and national holiday legends."

By selling the unknown heroes and clear villains who populate these northern horizons, by exploring that handful of metaphors that cut across private and regional issues, the magazine has crossed and sustained a family of readers united by common concern and shared common sense. *Maclean's* has purpose has never changed: to chronicle and substantiate the Canadian experience. It honors for some beyond the editors' own literary family complex. Covering

all of the country has always been *Maclean's* mission, trying to appeal to the majority of Canadians who live beyond the introspective

borderlines of Toronto's Harbour and Don rivers. Holdings, magazine is a real production, depending on it on a measure of cash, timing, intuition and difficult to prove misperceptions. It's easy enough to create a false sense of excitement by magnifying fears and glorifying the prophets of joy or disaster. The real trick is to echo and articulate the half-formed—but no less deeply felt—emotions of a magazine's readers, giving voice to the underlying themes and concerns of their lives.

Running *Maclean's* is an experimental craft at best. Its editors must think constantly. As they chronicle life, they distinguish from the howling outside, *Maclean's* staff and contributors find themselves writing about a country of the mind—not just as a country of the spirit.

I have been particularly impressed by the current crop in charge of the magazine. They understand their mandate and fulfill it with grace and authority. They are well aware that this country is caught between two incarnations—the old political and business dynasties seeking to perpetuate their power, and on creating new order led by society's outsiders. Canadian history has turned on the centuries struggle between these two groups. As in the past, *Maclean's* champions the new crowd, hungry for change.

Reading *Maclean's* is a way of looking at the world. It is rooted in based on the slightly heretical notion that the magazine has had the time, space and talent to pull together for a national audience the essential weekly interpretations of a country and its many cultures in writing. A great magazine issue has an element of mystery—neither its readers nor its editors are quite sure in advance exactly what a well-crafted. The guiding principle is to capture the mood and significance of the week's events rather than merely summarize their details.

*Maclean's* has been pointed in the best sense, seldom taking partisan stances, but always offering a platform that helps set the national agenda. The magazine's editorial stance has been justifiably critical only in the sense that the magazine chooses no favorites. It has never been afraid of defending the often against French Canadian agitators and English-Canadian conservatives, quitters all, evading the most: those. Last, there are too many of us who care about this country. We won't let Canada go!

There is only one magazine that counts, and I subscribe to it as passionately now as I did 40-odd years ago, when I first cheered about its capacity to rise in price.

### TRUCKIN' RIGHT ALONG

Sales of minivans, sport styles and pickup support most of passenger cars in March

|                |       |
|----------------|-------|
| Passenger cars |       |
| March 1999     | 93.2% |
| March 1998     | 64.8% |
| Trucks         |       |
| March 1999     | 94.9% |
| March 1998     | 61.3% |

Source: Statistics Canada

## Approval for pot

A Toronto man wins the right to use marijuana to counter the effects of AIDS

A Toronto man who is battling AIDS has become the second Canadian to win the right to legally grow and smoke marijuana for medical purposes. A judge of the Ontario Superior Court granted 54-year-old Jim Wakeford an unusual exception from prosecution for as long as it takes Health Canada to rule on his application to be allowed to use the illegal drug. "It's been a long haul," said Wakeford, who was diagnosed with full-blown AIDS in 1993 and first went to court last September, asking Ottawa for a safe and affordable supply of marijuana for medical purposes. "I'm fighting for my life," Wakeford says. Marijuana helps stimulate his appetite and combats the nausea caused by AIDS medications. In court last fall, federal officials claimed that Wakeford could apply for permission to use marijuana for medical purposes under an existing regulation. But his lawyer told Justice Harry LaForme that after he applied on Wakeford's behalf in September, Ottawa acknowledged his letter—after 5½ months went by before federal officials wrote again, asking for further information. Under the ruling, Wakeford may grow marijuana, but cannot legally buy



Wakeford: 'I'm fighting for my life'

it. Health Minister Allan Rock, who said that Ottawa would say appeal the judgment, added that he would conduct plans next month for federally backed clinical trials to investigate the medical use of marijuana. In 1997, a lower-court ruling gave Terry Parker, an epileptic from Toronto, the right to use marijuana to control seizures.

## Canola power

After three years of research, federal scientists have given canola oil a clean bill of health. Oil from the canola plant, a major crop in Western Canada, is widely considered to be a healthy food

—even capable of reducing blood cholesterol levels. But in 1996, a Japanese researcher argued that when rats—which were bred to make them susceptible to elevated blood pressure and strokes—were fed a variety of oils, the canola meal was highest among those given canola. Studies by Health Canada scientists suggest that the rats, not canola, were the problem. According to Nissal Renukappa, a nutritional expert who led the research, the rats in the Japanese study have cells that are unusually prone to rupture. That condition was exacerbated by a normally beneficial component of canola oil—plant-derived phytochemicals, which reduce cholesterol. "These rats," says Renukappa, "were not the right ones to use—they are not normal animals."

## Life and death

As the global population ages, deaths from non-communicable diseases, including those linked to smoking and alcohol, that strike older people, will account for nearly three-quarters of the world's annual toll by the year 2020. That forecast comes from the World Health Organization annual report issued last week. Deaths from non-communicable diseases, including heart attacks and strokes, made up 43 per cent of the global total last year. The report estimated that the number of smokers in the world will rise to 1.6 billion over the next two decades, from the current level of about 1 billion—and boost the number of tobacco-related deaths to about 10 million a year, from the current annual level of about 5.5 million. The report also said that AIDS displaced tuberculosis as the global's deadliest infectious disease in 1998, causing an estimated 2.8 million deaths and emerging as the leading cause of death in Africa. Last year, non-communicable diseases accounted for 81 per cent of the illnesses in developed nations. In the future, said WHO Director General Gro Harlem Brundtland, "the developing world is going to get the same burden as people the longer and more on new habits such as smoking tobacco."



## ALBERTA DEALER OF EXCELLENCE AWARD WINNER

### Russ Joseph

We proudly salute the Maclean's 1999 Alberta Dealer of Excellence Award winner, Mr. Russ Joseph, General Manager and Partner of Red Deer Toyota (1988) Ltd. in Red Deer, Alberta.

Maclean's magazine, in partnership with the Canadian Automobile Dealers Association, is proud of its role as the sponsor of the Dealer of Excellence Award Program, recognizing the best new car dealers across Canada.

Russ captured the Alberta Dealer of

Excellence Award by outperforming in three important areas: business acumen, association involvement and community contribution.

Russ's exemplary service adds heart to the nation's automotive industry and, like Maclean's magazine, provides what matters to Canadians.

For friendly, expert advice on buying or leasing a new car, visit Russ Joseph, Maclean's Dealer of Excellence Award winner for Alberta.



## Understanding juvenile diabetes

A University of Calgary scientist may have uncovered a vital clue in the efforts to create a vaccine against Type 1 diabetes, which affects children and young adults. In experiments with diabetes-prone mice, immunologist Ji-Won Yoon found that animals in which an enzyme called GAD was suppressed did not develop the disease. GAD is also present in humans, and Yoon—whose findings were published in the journal *Science*—speculated that a faulty immune system in some children attacks the enzyme. According to Yoon's theory, that attack damages the pancreas, which produces GAD. If the damage reduces the ability of the pancreas to produce the hormone insulin—which enables the body to convert sugar into energy—that sets the stage for diabetes. About 150,000 Canadian children and young adults suffer from Type 1 diabetes.



## Ann Dowsett Johnston

# Gay-bashing comes out

**At 17, Vase Deacon** knows her own mind. Yet, she would like to bring her mother to the interview at Toronto's SkyDance Hotel. No, she does not want her mother to do the talking. Yet, she will have the burger and fries. And yes, she "framed" when she learned that she had won the Canada Trust Scholarship for Outstanding Community Leadership, valued at more than \$50,000—and no, she did not let her mother open the envelope. Deacon won the award for launching a crusade initiative to fight homophobia in Winnipeg schools. No, she is not gay herself—but that, she says, is irrelevant. Her aim is to red schools of homophobic graffiti, name-calling and teasing—and she will do it by the price. "One man called me Sam's cohort," says the sophomore son from Kellie High School. "I've been told. I'm uncool, that I've been brainwashed. With what's been going on, it's been pretty hard to remain cool."

What's becoming so is an age-battle over anti-homophobia education. It started in early April when the Warrensburg school board, the largest in the province, voted 7 to 2 to establish a special committee to "assess the need for 'diversity' materials," and to identify areas where anti-homophobia education might be appropriate. One week later, more than 500 people crowded into the theatre corner of R.B. Russell Vocational High School for the board's regular public hearing. Taking a turn in the microphone, Deacon opposed "the goal of building tolerance, making all students comfortable in a unifying, mature environment." A mobster of the dregs followed, wagging in with her approval. But halfway through the evening, the mood turned rosy. Betty Hawley, founder of the Asian/Pacific Heterosexuals, although not a parent himself—accused homosexuals of fostering homophobia to advance their own agenda. When he shouted: "Keep your hands off our kids," the back-half of the room cheered. "From there," says Deacon, "it got worse. There were mildly obscene

That same evening, Henry Rubenstein distributed his opinion piece, entitled "What Gay/Lesbian Activists Want Tell Their Kids or Your Children: Heterosexual Myths and Realities." Rubenstein, a 56-year-old anthropology professor at the University of Minnesota, charges that "although there is no such scientifically established pathological trait called homophobia," gay activists have misused science to portray their opponents as "perverse Chameleons." He also attacks the "myth" that society has no right to judge diverse sexual practices. "If this were true," writes Rubenstein, "then society would also have no right to condemn incest, pedophilia, rape, cannibalism and bestiality."

On the second public evening, this time drawing a crowd of 350, Rubenoma explained why he had written the parables: "Homosexuality is rare, largely because it is so boring."

cally and culturally maladaptive to the human species." Valerie Desautel headed home at midnight, feeling physically sick, with a full set of notes

Last week, Deacon and 19 other students from several schools received their scholarships at a gala ceremony in Toronto, hosted by Pamela Wallin. After a celebratory luncheon at Canada's trade offices, Deacon rushed back to Winnipeg for a third public meeting. This time, the first speaker was Verónica Zorn, an eight-year-old girl, who told everyone that she didn't want hatephobia in her school. When the girl beamed out into the hall with her mother, the headline was so loud that police had to intervene.

The South public meeting, scheduled for next week, promises to be as dramatic as any of 73 delegations waiting to be heard. "What is interesting is that the majority of the cases who have opposed the initiative are from out of district. These include Pineda and Sepulveda-Zabala, whose children are registered as private school. In recent weeks, the Zabala boys gathered more than 4,000 signatures for a petition against anti-homophobia education. Teachers explaining that homosexuality is an aberrative rather than child shield the IRS OK," says Sepulveda-Zabala. "We are Christian. But gay men are not just hand holding, kissing men. What they do in their beds is private."

Surely, the board's purpose is not indoctrination. Says creator Mario Saccoccio, "We want to create a safe learning environment." But given the public outcry, he says, "the special curriculum will never exist." Instead, the matter has been referred to a standing committee of the board.

One parent, who is opposed to the initiative at all levels, believes that it should be left to families to educate on sacred areas. He says: "Teaching the Golden Rule pretty well covers it all." And do all students understand that Golden Rule? Hasn't one been known to the contrary in the recent Vink murder? Is last year's murder of gay college student Matthew Shepard so easily forgotten? It's hard to believe, only weeks after the killings in Lindbergh and Tibbetts, that a bid for tolerance could preclude such insensitivity to racism. Remember that young gay men are 10 times more likely to attempt suicide than their heterosexual male peers. And that in schools across North America, the put-down of choice is "That's so gay."

Videne Desautels' dream is to become a teacher and perhaps school trustee. The trip to Tucson—and the winning of her scholarship—have only strengthened her resolve. It's a good thing. Last week, a girl pointed at Desautels across the schoolyard and told a mutual friend: "Thanks to her, I can't see Tucson' without smiling from inside." What a shame.



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| City          | Population |
|---------------|------------|
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| New York      | 20,000,000 |
| Los Angeles   | 10,000,000 |
| Chicago       | 10,000,000 |
| San Francisco | 4,000,000  |
| San Jose      | 1,000,000  |
| San Diego     | 3,000,000  |
| San Antonio   | 1,500,000  |
| Phoenix       | 3,000,000  |
| Portland      | 500,000    |
| Seattle       | 400,000    |
| San Jose      | 1,000,000  |
| San Francisco | 4,000,000  |
| San Diego     | 3,000,000  |
| San Antonio   | 1,500,000  |
| Phoenix       | 3,000,000  |
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# Top of the world

Amanda Marshall's own, personally revealing, songs grace her second album

**How's this for youthful confidence?**

"The best discovery I made about myself was that a lot of the things that I thought I couldn't do were really just things that I hadn't got around to yet." So says singer Amanda Marshall, who found she was able to co-write nearly all of the 13 songs on her second album, *Tuesday's Child*, including one with legendary singer-songwriter Carole King. "There was nothing," says Marshall, "but you really sort of say that."

It's that way often, at 35, you're entering on top of the world. Marshall, with her Modigliani hair and Andromeda voice, enjoys an enviable position in pop music. The Toronto native first gained attention as a teenage singer in local bars, where her big, bluesy voice prompted one critic to call her "the new child of Joe Cocker and Janis Joplin." After signing with Sony Music, Marshall spent two years touring first covers and then at her 1996 eponymous-debut album produced on Top 10 singles in Canada and sold more than two million copies worldwide.

Marshall owns songs, she admits, not "more personal, less anonymous" than those on her debut album. Many evoke a feeling of regret as dissatisfaction with the fleeting circumstances that she sees as occupational hazard. "There's a real sense of ennui about anything that's casual when you do it for a living," says Marshall, "because you're constantly bringing people into your life and then leaving them so quickly. It's very easy to become isolated."

While on the road, Marshall realized that the songs that drew the strongest reaction were often the three that she either wrote or co-wrote on her first album. From then on, she kept a notebook in which she wrote anything that struck her fancy: bits of poetry, snippets of reeky sentences just a phrase she



thought might make a promising song title. For *Tuesday's Child*, Marshall contacted Eric Burdon, composer of Janis Joplin's rouser 1995 hit *One of Us*. Marshall and Burdon co-wrote 10 of the songs on her new CD, using her notebook jottings as a springboard. Emboldened by the breakthrough, Marshall called up King, one of pop's most prolific songwriters in the 1960s, whose 1971 album, *Tapestry*, sold 25 million copies. "Basically they were the album's mid-tempo ballad *After All*," says Marshall, who flew to Los Angeles to work with the 57-year-old musician. "I think she was in a little bit of where she was when the first started out. It was new to it and she seemed sort of reflected in each other."

One of the strongest songs on *Tuesday's Child* is also the album's most explicitly autobiographical. *Shades of Grey* details Marshall's life as a child of a bisexual marriage. Her Trinidadian mother-in-law, and her father is white. Marshall sings that when her paternal grand-

mother told her for the first time, she "shooked God I looked like my daddy." She adds that there was never any overt racism, just as unspoken disapproval. But by Marshall's own account, her childhood was happy. Her parents died on their only child, and enrolled her at Toronto's Royal Conservatory of Music when she was 3.

Marshall is loath to discuss her personal life. Her boyfriend of several years is also a member of her band, but she refuses to provide any details. Nor does she bring her largest to work either, Canada, or otherwise. "I usually don't know any of them," she says, adding, "it's ridiculous to think that I would feel connected to Sheryl Crow by virtue of the fact that we're both female and have curly hair. We're all pop singers. We have that much in common. That's a disgusting idea that we live our lives individually to think that we all feel the same way or share any kind of sorcery." Lullie Fair, vice versa.

Nicholas Jovanovic

# Greer's call to arms

A passionate feminist pioneer argues it is time for women 'to get angry again'

**There's something** about Germaine Greer that women adore. It's probably not her politics: the author of *The Female Eunuch* (1970) is far too left, too iconoclastic and too bloody-minded to inspire wide consensus. But when the 60-year-old feminist, writer and academic made an appearance at a Toronto function recently, she was in the air. Greer pulled in more than 1,400 women, a record for the Women of Influence series (sponsored by *Chatelaine* magazine), and delivered a fiery, passionate call to arms. Echoing her new book, *The Whole Woman*, Greer declared the state of almost everything important to women, from reproductive medicine to peer representation in management. "Women's lives are sadder than they were 30 years ago," she said, but they are also harder. It's true, Greer declared, "to get angry again"—about money, about work, about what it means to be female.

It is this very public stir, served up with Greer's characteristic wit, that women rejoiced in. The problem is that this new book reads like little more than a series of unvarnished headlines. The literary industry, in its obsession with selling products, the ups, has deliberately infused women with what the medical profession calls "body dysmorphic disorder"—a neurosis with perceived physical defects. The pill and IUD industry to "abortion" and routine screening for cervical cancer results in the "hysterectomy."

On topics where the a confident, such as motherhood, work, and what it means to be female, Greer offers no direct hit. Who could argue that, despite decades of feminism, women feel more pressure than ever to appear apologetic, squandering their precious time and energy in round battles with implacable foes like cellulite? Children, far from being assets and delights in themselves, are viewed more and more by



Greer: A series of women's headlines

society as a "do-it-on resources and a dog on life pleasure." "Their mothers, raised to worry, guilt and exhaustion, will take the blame if their marriages fail or their children turn out badly. Depression, the plague of women that is seldom taken seriously, is a rational response to these 'unbearable circumstances,'" Greer says.

But the book's force is underlined by Greer's tendency to go out on a limb when discussing subjects she seems to know little about. This is particularly true when it comes to medicine, a discipline she appears to view in one of the dark arts. Unsurpassed screening of breast cancer dyslexia, she claims, although she supplies very little support for that claim. Intestine examinations causes more suffering than joy, she says, adding the questionable conclusion that it gives women who conceive artificially against those who do so naturally. Too often, her arguments simply descend into a rant, doing both Greer and the women's movement a disservice. Given her well-deserved status as a groundbreaking feminist, it is unfortunate that Greer failed to give her new book the sober second thought that first-class work requires.

Patricia Chisholm

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# The revival of Salman Rushdie

While still wary, the author is gradually emerging from the shadow of a death sentence

By Anthony Wilson-Smith

For the man who has spent a decade living a real-life version of *The Fatima*, Salman Rushdie no longer fits the part as well as he once did. True, the 51-year-old author's whereabouts are kept secret, meetings are arranged in clandestine fashion, and his activities are surrounded by several bodyguards close by. That was the case last week, as members of the RCMP's VIP squad hovered about during a visit to Toronto mostly spent inside a downtown hotel room. And when Rushdie, read at the University of Toronto from his new book *The Gravel Beneath Her Feet*, appeared had to provide photo identification and were not allowed to bring bags. But the *fatwa*, or death sentence, pronounced by the then-leader of Iran in 1989 was lifted last September—and so, at once, were Rushdie's spines. "This is a time of caution; the danger has not gone, but lessened," a friend Rushdie said in a one-hour interview. "It makes it possible to again move ahead."

For the Bombay-born Rushdie, that marks a crucial development, but only one of several pivotal developments in recent years. He married his third wife, landscape companion Elizabeth Wurtz, in 1995; the couple have a 22-month-old son, Milia. (Rushdie has a 20-year-old son, Zafar, from his first marriage.) The heavy-lidded look that made him appear brooding a generation—the result of surgery several months ago to correct a condition called ptosis, by which the eyelids that 36 his eyelids were growing weaker and attaching to the face so sometimes had to grip his eyes open

with his fingers. Now, he says, he "can see things more clearly. Everything is brighter."

That is an appropriate metaphor for Rushdie's life. He acknowledges constant danger from Islamic splinter groups still forming over where they call the "blasphemous" look at their religion that was a consequence of his 1988 book *The Satanic Verses*. He lost one group has a \$4-million bounty on him. But Rushdie says he tries to overlook that, and in professional life appears to be approaching the peak of his creative powers. Although some of his recent previous novels (along with three non-fiction books) and a screenplay have taken up to five years to write, he now writes with energy and ideas and says he "hold my breath I have eight different books in my head."

His new book has received rave reviews—and is his most accessible, despite its complexity. The sprawling plot of *The Gravel Beneath Her Feet* enters a mysterious, the authorward, mechanism and leaps into a parallel universe, in language that is metaphorical, poem-filled and exuberant. It draws from the myth of Ophelia and Burial, the doomed musical romance and his last love.

Rushdie had liked rock music since his years in India, when he listened to Bill Haley and the Comets and Elvis Presley on the now-defunct Radio Ceylon. "I think I have a lot of a rock'n'roll sensibility," Rushdie says with a smile. "I think he overlooked because of the controversy around me." His fascination is evident in the new book, as protagonists are rock stars, born from Bombay and the other, having a father who comes from there. The book is peppered with an-



The novelist: "This is a time of caution—the danger has not gone, but lessened"

lines from old film and literary references of rock history (in one, John Lennon, rather than Mick Jagger, sings *Sentimental*). In real life, Rushdie's friends include Benji of U2, Lee Reed and David Bowie. In a case of art imitating life, lyrics for a song in *The Gravel Beneath Her Feet* have been used by U2 for a ballad of the same name on the band's next album.

That fascination with pop culture seems rooted from Rushdie's recent travels. Born to a wealthy family in Bombay in 1947, he attended the posh Rugby private school in England, and later studied history at Cambridge. When Rushdie graduated in 1968, he moved to Pakistan, where his parents had relocated. He got a job as a story producer for a government television station when it created the word "joke," and gave up on life there when an article he wrote for a magazine was also censored. Returning to England, Rushdie spent 10 years as an advertising

copywriter, crafting fiction in his spare time. His first novel, *1973: The Gravel*, an allegory set on an imaginary island, received scant, ambivalent attention.

Rushdie's breakout came with *Midnight's Children*, which began with India's last independence day and swept effortlessly through the subsequent years and finally, it won the 1981 Booker Prize. But the controversy surrounding *The Satanic Verses* brought Rushdie much greater success, success. On Valerian's Day, 1988, he was at home with his wife Marianne Wiggins, an American novelist, when he received a call from a radio reporter asking, "How does it feel to be sentenced to death by the Ayatollah Khomeini?" That began a decade spent in seclusion. His marriage broke down in 1991, and he made a desperate attempt that year to have the *fatwa* called off by saying he planned to become a devout Muslim. The entreaty

proved failed. "It wasn't my best idea," says Rushdie, who follows no religion.

The danger of the controversy were very real. Six people died and more than 100 were injured in anti-Rushdie riots in Asia, and a Japanese book translator was stabbed to death. In London, more than 30,000 Muslims demonstrated outside Parliament, many chanting "kill Rushdie." But Rushdie received crucial support from then-Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. Though he had been—and is—one of her most ardent critics, she backed his cause, and supplied security.

Not all fellow writers sympathized. In 1997, Rushdie crossed swords with John le Carré (whose real name is David Cornwell). He said Rushdie should not presume that "great religion may be resolved with impunity." In an interview with *Midnight* last March, le Carré admitted the irony, saying "the willingness

of Christians to embrace criticism doesn't mean cynicism is required to embrace the same skepticism where their God is mocked." Rushdie responds emphatically that le Carré's sentiments arise because "the faith helps being a pompous jerk, and he has never gotten over the fact that I wrote a bad review of [his book] *The Russia House*."

Rushdie says he first scribbled elements of *The Gravel Beneath Her Feet* in a notebook eight years ago, but started in earnest in 1994. It began with a fictional earthquake in Mexico on Valerian's Day, 1589 (the day the *fatwa* was declared). "I had an earthquake that never happened destroy places of silence in real life," he says. He followed the notion that "if you change the world, you make it fresh. I ask readers to accept versions of the world that are not so."

These days, Rushdie is experiencing the delights and frustrations that come from increased freedom—and notoriety. Rushdie says he is so well known that views of his books are colored by people's views of him. He feels "like the aging grandfather slipping bourbon in a shaker. Even if you mind your business, one bad will always come after you to cheer you down."

His fame has made him a daunting even in circles where his books are unknown. Recently, he was invited to a party at the Playboy Mansion in Los Angeles. Someone brought forward a Playboy bunny "who had not a clue who I was, nor a clue to her head. But when the bunny was off, after a smile she gave." After the picture appeared in British newspapers, Rushdie says, "It was a little explaining to my wife."

Then there is the unique window that Rushdie has acquired on another aspect of celebrity. In Los Angeles he realized that he was staying at the same hotel as Thatcher—even though he had not seen her. The question he knew was that he encountered on the elevator one day a British government security agent who had previously guarded him—and who, he knew, is now with Thatcher. "And how is midlife?" he asked the guard. "Enjoying life, sir," came the polite reply. After a long time in darkness, the same terms are for Rushdie again. ■



Allan Fotheringham

## A lifelong fight for freedom

On May 31, 1940, the "miracle" of Dunkirk got 60,000 troops off the beaches of France and saved the core of the British Army that would return to Normandy four years later.

One who didn't make it was Doug Collins, a teenage sergeant in the Second Gloucesters where only 270 of the 600-man battalion had survived. As a prisoner of war, he was shipped off to a concentration camp in Gliwice on the Polish border, where he was told he would work until the end of the war.

On Sept. 7, he escaped, headed for Russia. Caught within 30 km, he was returned and in punishment was forced to strip and stand naked for 24 hours with his face to the wall. It was his 20th birthday and he was in his birthday suit, being beaten by enraged German guards.

He was put to work in a Silesian coal mine. He escaped. He was sent to Stalag VIIIB, then shipped to a prison camp from which he escaped again. He also escaped from Stalag Luft III. He passed through a camp with a mine that at that time meant nothing to him. It was Auschwitz.

In winter, but only garments, being a blanket coat, was once returned by him that one day it passed like chess and left again. A Gruppe of officer spoke flawless English and Collins asked him where he learned the language so well. "In England, I was at Oxford."

An adolescent boy, he spent his time in prison, where he wasn't escaping, learning German so he could bluff his way once outside. He learned the poetry of Heine and Schiller.

He travelled his way out, half his companions shamelessly shot in the head when caught. He got within 16 km of Hungary. He once cut the barbed wire to get out and, when the searchlights went on, cut it up again in retreat, leaving his buddies in the forest that he was the only soldier ever to break back into a concentration camp. He escaped the next night.

He made it to Romania, citing raw potatoes in the fields, where he and comrade buddy Ted Lancaster made the only recorded escape from secret police headquarters in Bucharest. As a reward/compliment, the Romanians set up a special camp in which Collins and Lancaster were the only inmates.

At the end, he was imprisoned when the American B-24s missed bombs down him, among at the Ploesti oilfields. Thereafter, he spent a period in Germany with the last flying branch of the British Coastal Command. Both he and Lancaster were awarded the Military Medal.

Now this would be the same Doug Collins that the famous Political Commission Forces of British Columbia, any province, are praising endlessly for supposedly Nazi-like thoughts about Jews.

Collins arrived at The Calgary Herald in 1952, and then to The Vancouver Sun as a relief from a Labourer who would despise as all, as our regular columnist hunches, for not having firm political views. One day, the trouble turned to war and he quietly allowed that he had escaped from 10 Nazi war camps.

Amused, we asked him why he hadn't written a book about it. He casually mentioned that he might one day. *Q&A: A Soldier's Story of His Own Escape from Nazi Prison Camps* was published by Norton of New York in 1968. Collins, after one of his usual disputes with management, left the Sun and went to work for the CBC, onwards to Ottawa. After one of his usual disputes with management, he asked your agent for some help. Always admiring his guts, I struggled to position him as a columnist.

Several months later, my publisher called me in. The CBC, with its routine bureaucracy had named the left-wing firm into a conservative machinery.

On his retirement to a tiny Vancouver house weekly, *Black Sheep News*, with a circulation of 50,000, suggested that while the Holocaust indeed did happen, the "six million" died was wildly exaggerated.

The wildly outrageous Political Commission NDP government of 1993 amended the B.C. Human Rights Act to begin disciplining newspapers or journalists for publishing anything "likely to expose a person or a group or class of persons to hatred or contempt."

The Canadian Jewish Congress complained about Collins and the tribunal dismissed the complaint. A Victoria businessman then funded the issue, and the tribunal in February ordered Collins to pay the chap \$2,000 and apologize.

Collins has appealed to the B.C. Supreme Court. He is now 78. He is a maniac to whom once he stood on a German prison roof, screaming imprecations at Nazi misopropositing opposers, while all his mates pleaded with him that they would be shot. But he has a right to write what he thinks. I believe it is something called freedom of expression. It is what he struggled for. Ten times.



Photo: Allan Fotheringham

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